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THE ITALIAN CAPTURE OF MONTE SANTO. By F. Bonavia. Illustrated.

COUNTRY LIFE

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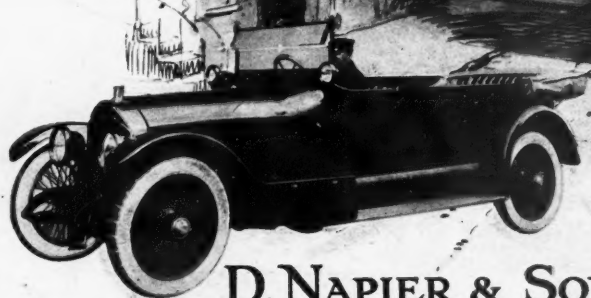
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COUNTRY LIFE

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E. O. HOPPE

THE COUNTESS OF ORFORD.

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COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN
COUNTRY LIFE & COUNTRY PURSUITS

OFFICES: 20, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

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FOREIGN LABOUR IN ENGLAND

IT has often been a topic commented upon that the geography of the working classes, and, indeed, of all classes, has been wonderfully rubbed up by the war. Distant places whose names were scarcely known in pre-war days are now as familiar as household words. Mesopotamia itself has been brought out of dreamland into reality. But it has not been so clearly observed that, as well as making the acquaintance of strange places, the war has brought new people to the acquaintance of the ordinary British public. In going along a country road one hears voices speaking a strange language, and presently there comes into sight a band of obviously labouring men. They have the countryman's slow gait and also the countryman's slow speech, yet their language is one totally unfamiliar to the rustic and even to some who, like the present writer,

are not wholly of the country. He made the acquaintance of a band of them, lost or wandering in a lane, and as they could not speak a word of English he was puzzled till one of them produced from his pocket a paper bearing the legend "Portuguese Camp" and the name of the village. They were engaged in forestry work, as was very evident from the huge axes and other implements carried by them. We met a very alarmed postwoman afterwards who was scuttling along the road on her bicycle in abject fear lest these men should be escaped German prisoners hastily armed with what they could pick up on the farm. But under no circumstances would any discerning observer have thought that German prisoners are seen often enough. They come along in fives, with a soldier behind them carrying a rifle. It is slung on his shoulder, but loaded, so that if any of them should turn, no doubt he would be able to deal with them. But they are soldierly-looking men for the greater part, compact, erect, blue-eyed and taciturn.

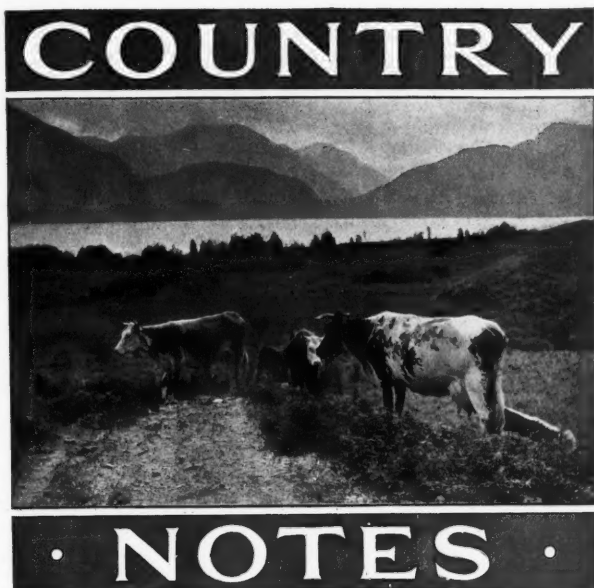
The Portuguese could at once be recognised as at least belonging to one of the Latin nations. Even those countrymen, toil-worn, hard-worked as some of them are, still carry about with them a touch of that romance for which you never look in vain at a Frenchman or an Italian. The Portuguese labourer by the very way in which he tips his hat, usually a rather tall one with a crown, attests his gay and gallant ancestry. More sun-burnt than our countrymen, hazel-eyed, ready with a salute and a smile to the passer-by, he bears the impress of a sunny clime reflected in a sunny nature. Not so the Germans. These men marching into a little town bear the hall-mark of discipline, looking very little to the left, very little to the right, as unemotional as a regiment of Life Guards marching through the city. Only in one individual did we notice signs of emotion, and the exhibition was rather an ugly one. Among the crowd who had gathered to watch the prisoners come in was a young Highland soldier talking carelessly to his sweetheart. One of the captives looking up caught a sight of the tartan, and in a second was transformed into what seemed almost a madman. He clenched and ground his teeth, his hands opened and shut convulsively, and his face grew hideous as though all the hate of Germany was pouring through it. As one of the onlookers observed, his memories of the tartan did not seem to be of a happy kind. But this was a very exceptional case. The German captive reminds one greatly of a machine. He does his work well, but mechanically, as though following directions, yet with a quickness that shows how he has either been forced or taught to work hard.

It cannot be said that the working classes of this country are overpowered with joy at finding representatives of other lands in their midst. They tolerate the Portuguese and feel inclined, if not to laugh at, at least to laugh with them, for they are a merry crew, and they are not interfering with any local work when engaged in trimming up and cutting the great elms which lie on the road, victims of the famous gale that swept over the country eighteen months ago. With the Germans it is different. They come as workers, and among those who look on are many whose sons, fathers or brothers have died on the battlefield. Not a few are in the possession of letters which show the frightfulness and cruelty with which the Germans have conducted war. It is not to be expected that they should receive a cordial welcome, and the Government is not winning favour by treating them with so much liberality in the way of food and lodging. Those of them whom we have met speak no English whatever, and are obviously here for the first time. In their work they give evidence that they perform harvesting, at least, in Germany much in the same way as we do here. They need very little teaching. It is rather a pity that the Government does not let them out to gardens, at any rate to vegetable gardens. Here they might be of great service in the production of food.

Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece this week is a portrait of the Countess of Orford, whose marriage took place on the 15th of this month. Lady Orford is the youngest daughter of the Rev. T. H. R. Oakes and Mrs. Oakes of Netley, St. Matthew, Southampton.

* * It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



IT is certainly advisable that farmers should obtain the Memorandum explaining the principal provisions of the Corn Production Act as regards agricultural production in England and Wales, which has just been officially issued. The features of the Act are known in the rough, but they want to be particularly studied by those whose interests are affected. One of the most important of the clauses is the first, dealing with the Agricultural Wages Board. Its business will be the fixing of minimum wages for workmen; but the farmer has to remember that "workmen" in this phrase includes boys, women and girls. "Employment in agriculture" is another portmanteau phrase holding in it not only those who work on farms, but those engaged on osier land, woodland, orchards, market gardens and nursery ground. All the particulars given in regard to minimum rates, the procedure in fixing them and the method by which they are to be enforced, will need the most careful consideration if the employer does not wish to stumble into trouble. We notice that the Act is not a luxury that is to be had for nothing, as the expenses of the Wages Board or a District Committee, with compensation for loss of time, are to be paid for out of public funds.

IN M. Painlevé the French have as Prime Minister one of the strongest men in their country. Whatever he has attempted in scholarship or practical affairs in the past has succeeded, and surely that is a good omen for his future in the Ministry. The Allies of France will cordially welcome the statement which, along with his collaborators, he has placed before the country. In this he makes his avowal that the main point of his programme will be to ask both Parliament and the nation to give their entire strength to the war, as much in the strictly military sense as in questions of diplomacy and domestic economy. With the working classes he is determined to remain in perfect concord, but at the same time with that directness of speech without which an understanding is impossible. Misdemeanours and crimes among them will be resolutely checked. This is a good programme, and it is not embellished by any false glitter of rhetoric. The times, in fact, do not lend themselves to mere eloquence. The eloquence we require in the Ministers of State in every country is to be found more in deeds than in words, in a steady and unshakable concentration of the great object of all—the winning of the war.

THE remarks made in these columns last week about the high prices charged in restaurants and clubs for potatoes and other vegetables have evidently fallen on responsive ears. Several correspondents have written confirming what we said, and one has been kind enough to enclose a bill of fare from the daily menu of a well known establishment, and also a list of prices from one of the best stores, namely, Shoolbred's. From the one document we learn that potatoes are sold and delivered at a penny a pound for the best quality. It is called 7d. for 7lb.—as a great store does not deal in pennyworths. But in the bill of fare potatoes are charged 3d., and the portion given very often consists of a single medium-sized potato cut into three pieces. Several of these whole potatoes would be required to make a pound, so that

the price on the bill of fare must spell an enormous profit, especially if it be considered that potatoes can be purchased wholesale at very much less than Shoolbred's retail price. Vegetable marrows afford another curious illustration. A marrow portion is priced on the bill of fare at 6d., while the marrow itself is retailed at from 2d. to 4d., according to size. We leave housekeepers to reckon how many portions would come out of one vegetable marrow. In these cases there is a decided prolongation of war prices after scarcity has been succeeded by abundance.

THE reason for dealing with these matters is that economy in the use of meat and bread is even more necessary to-day than it has been in previous years, and the natural way to save in these two directions is by a more liberal use of vegetables. In the country the saving is very easily effected, because gardens are literally stuffed full of all sorts of vegetables, and the only difficulty is to prevent their going to waste. This being the case, it is incredible that those who buy vegetables for the purpose of purveying to the public can be charged anything like a price that would justify what they charge customers. Of course, all garden products cannot be had as cheaply as those to which we have alluded. The price of onions keeps up, because there do not seem to be any onions imported; yet the quantity of onions produced within the British Islands this autumn must far surpass the yield of any previous year. It is the same with carrots. There are plenty in the garden, and yet they are very dear in the market. Perhaps the reason is that many who grow carrots in considerable quantities can utilise them for purposes other than those of the table, and therefore do not send them to market. It is, at the same time, difficult to believe that there is any scarcity in regard to these useful vegetables. Cabbages are very plentiful and very cheap in all parts of the country. They could easily be reduced in price, or, what would answer the purpose much better, the quantity given could be very largely increased. Anyone who has plenty of cabbages can do with much less meat and bread. If these little points were carefully looked into, we feel quite sure that considerable saving would result in the directions where saving is most desirable.

ENGINE TROUBLE.

You skimmed and hovered, hawking at the foe,
And then out of the orbit of this war
Rose into skies we gnomes could not explore
(Even with straining eyes) they dazzled so.
The cosmos yours for ken, there . . . we, below,
A sudden quaver of your pinions saw
And, anguished, watched you dive through heaven's floor
Into the vast, whither our vanguards go.

Planet, race, dynasty, an unseen helm
Answer, through ages forging to their goals,
Until some unguessed flaw in their controls
(Throwing the engine out of gear) shall whelm
Pilot and craft. These are but endless tolls
Paid by our transience to incessant realm.

G. M. JEUDWINE.

THE Welsh are not usually regarded as a practical people, but in the matter of war memorials and agricultural education they are belying their reputation. The men of North Wales who have fallen in the war are to be commemorated by the establishment of a scientific agricultural and forestry department at the Bangor University, in connection with which scholarships are to be provided for the children of sailors and soldiers who have lost their lives during the war. To achieve these objects a fund of £150,000 is to be raised by public subscription; £50,000 of this amount has been already secured, and energetic measures are being taken to obtain the balance. Meanwhile the County Councils in North Wales are urging farmers to avail themselves of soil analysis and other modern agricultural methods, and are making use of the existing department at Bangor University for the purpose of providing the necessary facilities. In this respect North Wales has set an example worthy of being followed. What could be more appropriate as a memorial to the fallen hero than the creation of means whereby his children, and his children's children, will derive practical benefit?

WHEN the R.A.S.E. sends out a leaflet it is usually of importance, and none more interesting has been issued than that on the shot borer, or shot-hole borer, the name

given to certain beetles that play havoc with fruit trees. We may dismiss as being of little importance to the orchardist those which conduct their operations only in dry timber. Those that attack growing trees are the enemies which have to be dealt with. Mr. Cecil Warburton of the School of Agriculture, Cambridge, as might be expected, gives a short, accurate and succinct account of the natural history of the pests, but more important from a practical point of view are the measures which he recommends to be taken against them. The first is the removal of all sources of infection, and Mr. Warburton holds that at Evesham an opportunity occurs which may not come round again. The Food Production authorities are empowered to take strong measures, and his suggestion is that they should compel the immediate destruction of all hopelessly infested plum trees. His second hint is that the trees should be dressed with clay and lime, soft soap and washing soda, or similar preparations, the fruit grower keeping in mind that the two dates of special importance are June, when the first larvæ hatch out, and September, when the borings are full of beetles. A third recommendation is that the beetles should not only be warned off the plum trees, but provided with suitable timber to attack. If they can be induced to lay their eggs in trap trees which are to be finally removed and burned in June, it would no doubt be possible to thin them down to the point of extinction.

IN his speech at Sheffield on Saturday afternoon the President of the Board of Education used an expression of a type which might easily become too common. He said, speaking of the expense of his new educational project, "The money will be but a drop in the ocean, only the cost of thirty hours' of war, and it would be a perfect disgrace to this country if it came to the conclusion that some form of continued education for its adolescents was a good thing if it were not prepared to disburse what is spent in thirty hours." A great many people take the same view of the expense of the war. They think only that Great Britain is meeting it with consummate ease, and that any scheme, however expensive, can be financed in the same way. This attitude could only be assumed by those who have little imagination and less understanding of the extraordinary burden which this nation along with others is hanging round its neck. People do not think, do not feel, because they are as happy as the irresponsible borrower who rejoices because he has induced a lender to give him money. His aspect will undergo a severe and serious change when he is called upon to foot the bill—a very greatly accumulated bill it will be in the case of this nation; and colossal as are the resources of Great Britain, they will be strained to the very utmost before the demands are met. It is very possible that other nations may, in despair, have to repudiate their debts. At any rate, it is very dangerous to appeal to the war as a justification for new expenditure.

AMID the press of war preparations America finds time to discuss a project to present to this country a statue of Lincoln to be erected near that of Cromwell by the Houses of Parliament. The proposal is to give a replica of Barnard's figure of the martyred President, of which the original is at Cincinnati. The portrait shows Lincoln not only plain, but ungainly to the point of being grotesque. Some American critics assert that the sculptor's protest against idealisation makes the statue unfitting as a symbol in London of the American spirit of free government. It is suggested alternatively either that the St. Gaudens figure should be reproduced or that a new statue be modelled. It is a pleasant idea to commemorate the joint stroke for liberty of the two great branches of the English-speaking race by a statue of Lincoln in London. If the proposal takes shape we may rely on the American sense of civic art to give the statue a form that will do honour to the greatness of Lincoln and add a fresh interest to London's collection of memorials to those men whom we delight to honour.

IN the stream of revelations regarding the Kaiser's war policy, the most striking feature continues to be the long premeditated attack on Great Britain by the Kaiser. According to the ex-Russian Ambassador in Paris, Isvolsky, the Kaiser tried to convince him in 1905 that the best guarantee of peace was to be found in an alliance between Germany, Russia and France against Great Britain. The diplomat suggested that France would never consent to enter into such an alliance because the question of Alsace-Lorraine remained open. But the Kaiser insisted that it was settled, and on being asked for an explanation replied: "Certainly, it is settled. In the Morocco affair I threw down the glove

to France. France refused to pick it up; she refused to fight me. Consequently the Alsace-Lorraine question no longer exists." On the very day on which this was published there appeared the last chapter of Mr. Gerard's book, in which he brings all that previously went before to a head by pointing out that the deaths, sorrows, misadventures of the war have all occurred only "because in the dark, cold, northern plains of Germany there exists an autocracy deceiving a great people, poisoning their minds from one generation to another." This is the best annotation that could be made upon the vainglorious boast of the Kaiser.

WHILE it may most cordially be admitted that the objects of such schemes as that for the establishment of a Ministry of Health are admirable, it should also be noted that a vast number of projects are being brought forward in Parliament and that there is little chance of their being adequately debated. In the new Franchise Bill it has been seen that provisions which were thought essential by the promoters of the measure were disliked by the majority of the House, who appear to have interpreted fairly well the opinion of the country. The Education Bill brought forward by Mr. Fisher is another excellent but only half-baked dish. It wants the light of adequate discussion in order to show where it is weak and where it could be strengthened. So with this Ministry of Health. We who have advocated something of the kind for many years nevertheless feel that such a scheme ought to be strengthened by the very best minds in the country, and it is obvious that during war a man must be either very neglectful of the national interest or have a wonderful capacity for doing two things at once if he can abstract himself from the torrential feelings of the moment in order to concentrate his mind and energy upon social reform. The danger attendant upon settlements such as those being, as it were, thrust down the throat of Parliament at the present time is that they may prove no settlement at all, but only revive bitter controversies and keep them alive.

THE YOUNG SINGERS.

Our fathers singing in an earlier day,
With peace and golden quietness were sated;
So wooed they Sorrow for their Love and hated
The clear and joyful sunlight of the May.
So turned they from all simple, wholesome things
And sang of dark and drear imaginings.

But as the brave bird sings in morning skies
Although he knows that death may hover near;
So sing we more full-throated, gladsome, clear,
Knowing that e'er this day's sweet sunlight dies,
The fires of sacrifice may take our light,
And sink, and leave the coldness and the night.

Then sing we, heeding not the blows that stun,
Or kill, or leave our life a broken thing.
While there is time for Joy let Joy be King,
Reign Love and Joy before your hour is done!
Before the star must set that saw our birth
We will possess the Gladness of the Earth.

MERIEL GRAHAM.

EVERY encouragement should be given to the movement on foot for the purpose of creating a National Union of Allotment Holders. Those little cultivators did splendidly last year and, on what appear to be good data, it is estimated that they came in to the extent of nearly three-quarters of a million persons. Although it is not possible to estimate the addition this meant to the food supply of the country, it must be extraordinary. England is a land of good gardeners, and the skill, industry and ingenuity with which the most unpromising plots were attacked augurs well for the possibilities attending an extension of the movement. Those who have watched serious, elderly men and laughing school children working with equal ardour at the unpromising allotment will not only be highly pleased with the results, but filled with confidence that soil of any kind can be attacked with the certainty of making it contribute to the food supply of the country. Already one great point has been achieved. There is no longer a need for a Potato Controller, and that, indeed, is the only reason for Mr. Dennis retiring from the post. Other vegetables have been produced as prodigally as the potato, therefore we have every reason to look forward with the expectation of success to a very considerable increase in the number of allotment holders and in the area of land which they can bring into cultivation.

"I TOLD YOU SO!"

IT would be difficult to name a more irritating phrase than that which has been chosen to indicate the subject of this article, but there are occasions on which even these words can be used without exasperating effect.

The particular point to which I wish to refer is the fact that German prisoners are now being utilised to a very large extent on the farms and are doing excellent work. The farmers, of whom a number of typical examples have been interviewed on the subject, unite in praising the German prisoner as an industrious and most efficient workman. Moreover, the writer has not gone wholly by report, but has visited farms on which these men are engaged, and has seen the alertness and readiness with which they handle the work of the harvest. Now, it scarcely needs recalling that the first exhortation to employ this labour appeared in our columns. It is in no vain spirit that the fact is recalled, but it was one of those suggestions that seemed so absolutely consonant with common sense that one would have thought those in authority would have grasped it at once. My original idea was strongly confirmed during a visit paid to France in the summer of 1915 on an errand closely associated with agriculture, but not with this particular aspect. Still, being in the way of meeting a considerable number of people concerned with farming in France, it was only natural for me to make enquiry about the use of prisoners, and to do so was to discover that as early as in 1914 our very practical French allies had managed to get a number of people on the land. This was largely due to the tact and organising ability of M. André Aron, who at the beginning of the war was an eminent lawyer, and happily chose this as a practical means of serving his country when hostilities broke out.

As the home Government had not been responsive to the early appeals that they should put prisoners of war to work on the land, I got M. André Aron to write an account of what had been done in France, with the result that a very notable article appeared. It was read and quoted far and near, among others by many private landowners who would have been glad of such help as the experiment seemed to promise. I remember one of these ringing me up on the telephone. He was anxious to obtain German prisoners to help in a large afforestation scheme which he was intent on carrying out on his estate. What he wanted to know was whether the article on "German Prisoners in France" was written by an authority or only a journalist (!). The subject was not ignored in this country. In fact everybody seemed to know something about it except the permanent officials of the Board of Agriculture and the War Office. Ministers of one kind and another made enquiries and many were the demands to fix up a scheme for German prisoners working on the land. At one time they went so far as to call meetings of farmers to arrange for places where the prisoners could be lodged and to go into other preparations. Then the scheme fell through, apparently owing to some internal dissension, and for the time being at least was dropped.

The public never knew exactly what happened, because, in a way which has become traditional with this Government, several excuses were made for general consumption. The real reason never was given, but we were told that there was hesitation on the part of the farmers in employing these prisoners; that the difficulty of guarding them could not be overcome without taking away too many men from the Army; that they could be better employed in other ways than in agriculture; and so forth. As though there was anything more important than growing food for the population! What really happened seems to have been that red tape won its usual victory in the Foreign Office, where it long has reigned supreme, and that nobody outside had the courage and perseverance to force the scheme through. In these days of profuse expenditure it may be thought a trifle that considerable costs were incurred in the enquiries and preliminaries, to say nothing of the waste of time and energy which are invariably the result of vacillating and irresolute leadership. Now, in the fourth year of the war, German soldiers are placed on the farms, and the difficulties which were stated to be insuperable have vanished. It cannot be said that the work has been done very skilfully or very wisely even now. Those at headquarters who were responsible appear to have no conception of the public opinion with which they have to deal. In one instance known to the writer the German prisoners are housed in what might with very little exaggeration be described as a fine mansion with gardens and all the usual appurtenances. It goes out among the agricultural labourers that they are made more

comfortable than themselves, fed with two hot meals and one cold one a day—in a style, that is to say, which is unattainable on twenty-five shillings a week, where there is a family to keep as well. In this particular instance there is available in the very midst of the farming district where the men are working a hospital which has existed for many years without ever having a patient. The men could have been housed in it perfectly well, but instead they are taken to a town three or four miles off and have to walk back and forward daily to work. Here is another example of the waste characteristic of the methods of those who appear to have a maximum of power with a minimum of responsibility. In this case it may indeed be said, in Yorick's memorable phrase, "They order this matter better in France."

Our purpose in putting the phrase "I told you so!" is not to reproach or irritate, but, if possible, to bring the public to a recognition of the great waste involved in indecision. Ministers and officials are continually urging upon the country at large the need of meticulous economy. The conditions produced by war and likely to follow it are unanswerable arguments in favour of a prudent frugality. But consider the waste that has been incurred over the employment of German prisoners. To-day it is indisputable that this matter might have been settled in the first year of the war. The proof is that it was settled in France, and what could be done in one country could be accomplished in another. The difficulties that confronted M. André Aron were precisely those which had to be faced here. No doubt the French took up the matter more resolutely. They had conscription at the beginning of the war and we did not adopt it till later, so that all at once there was a great abstraction of workers from the soil and their places had to be filled somehow, so without discussion of whether it could or could not be done, was wise or unwise, attention was concentrated on the means of inducing rural employers to use a class of labourer naturally repugnant to them. If our country people have a natural feeling that those prisoners belong to the armies which have inflicted death and suffering upon their relatives, the French had still more cause to be inflamed. The barbarians had swept over and continued to hold a considerable part of their country. In demolished villages, in ruined lives, in the homelessness of erstwhile quiet populations, in the murder of old men and the violation of women, they had such cause for incense and hatred as could not be exceeded. But they mastered their feelings, as indeed it would have been foolish to do otherwise, since the choice was between feeding the prisoners and maintaining them or of utilising them for the purpose of cultivating the land they had set out to conquer.

The cultivation of food products here was at that time seriously handicapped by the lack of workers and by the ineptitude of some who were willing without being very skilful. At the same time potential labour was locked up in camps where each individual was a consumer instead of being, as he might have been, a producer. Here was waste indeed. Now, it is obvious that if any capable organiser had been allowed to take the matter in hand at the very first, if our leaders had been more awake and more alive to the exigencies of the situation and the available means for meeting them, there would have been a vast saving in all these directions. And perhaps the most important consideration of all is that the system, having once been set going, is capable of wider application.

According to the red tape regulations of the present moment, German prisoners may be utilised for work in a field, but not in a garden. Now the garden supply of food has assumed increasing importance with the progress of the war, and in many cases, it is most difficult to get the preliminary digging and other hard labour accomplished. These remarks, it need scarcely be said, apply solely to the vegetable garden. Anyone who has at disposal a considerable amount of garden ground might very profitably be allowed to obtain the service of German prisoners by paying for it on the same scale as farmers do. If this suggestion were adopted it would undoubtedly make a valuable addition to the food supply of next year. Autumn garden work for vegetables consists largely in turning over the soil—work that is inevitably neglected in these times because of the difficulty of finding labour—but when the harvest is in and ploughing with horse or tractor remains the chief work on the farm, there will not be the demand that there is now for extra help and it would be difficult to find any valid objection to sending the prisoners to suitable gardens. P.

UPPINGHAM SCHOOL HARVEST CAMP AT COCKERMOUTH

BY HOWARD PEASE.

"Rura cano rurisque Deos."

THE schoolboy of to-day employed in a harvest camp may next term quote his Tibullus with appreciation and the Georgics of Virgil with understanding. Agriculture, indeed, is an "art," as Varro said in his three books on farming which he wrote for his wife's guidance, "who had just bought an estate and wanted to farm it to advantage." For art we should now say science, and it is highly desirable that our boys should appreciate this fact and learn to love the country not solely as the scene of hunting, shooting and fishing, but also as a means of livelihood and a fascinating profession.

Otherwise, in the face of a swollen Income Tax under both Schedules A and B, increased tithe and rates, the "old places" will have to go to the auction mart.

The Squire of Halston, Salop, the celebrated John Mytton, agreed to go to Oxford if he were not required to read anything more than "The Racing Calendar" and the "Stud Book." "Christmas lasted till Easter at Halston," wrote his biographer, "and hunting, fishing and shooting all the year round." This golden age has vanished; the squire must now take off his coat and work himself.

The success of the Uppingham harvest camp is undoubted, and most of the credit for this must be given to the Camp Commandant, the Rev. C. Creighton, son of the late Bishop of London, whose tact and previous knowledge of harvest camp work fitted him admirably for this task. Two years ago he served his apprenticeship at the camp organised by the Rev. J. G. McCormick for Mr. H. Overman's farm, Kipton House, Norfolk, and last year he was himself in charge there.

In some quarters it seems to have been thought that once a camp was started it would "go of itself" and that the farmers would rush in with their applications. Quite the contrary. The farmer is a conservative and sceptical individual. He regards the "furrinor," as they say in Northumberland, or the "ootner," as they say in Cumberland, with

personally canvassed the farmers and explained things to them in the market at Cockermouth every Monday from morn to eve.

The camp started on August 1st and lasted to September 12th. The Camp Commandant has been in charge all the time; ten of the Uppingham masters have assisted him during this period and one boy, M. B. Yeatman, has been in camp all the time, thus giving up six out of his seven weeks'



LAYING THE THISTLES LOW.

Gaily as these Uppingham boys are swinging their scythes, this is by no means such light work as it looks.

holiday to work on the land. Seventy boys in all have worked here, each one being in residence for three weeks.

But it is not their time alone they give: they also contribute some pocket money, for what they earn is not sufficient to cover their expenses, as they pay for their "rations" and all extras, apart from railway fares, which are free. Their rations (army rations) are as follows, and cost 10½d. per head per diem: 14ozs. bread, 12ozs. meat, 2ozs. sugar, 2ozs. bacon, ½oz. salt, ½oz. tea, in addition to which, jam, milk, butter, eggs, vegetables, etc., have to be provided and paid for.

As to the work performed by the boys it is very varied. The present writer has seen where they worked at the outlet of Bassenthwaite Lake, below Ouse bridge on the Derwent banks, to lower the level and drain the pastures above; also fell sides where the bracken has been cut down and fields of pasture where *carduus arvensis* (the creeping thistle) has been pitilessly laid low. The pay is not high—1s. per acre; where the thistles are very thick three acres would be a good day's work for anyone with a scythe, and more than a boy could manage in a seven hour day, which is the average time worked.

On sundry occasions a squad of boys have served as grouse beaters ("food production"), others at hedge cutting and turnip weeding, and as the weather permitted they have worked in the cornfields, where on the smaller farms the binding has to be done by hand. One might see the Camp Commandant after supper instructing the boys how to make bonds of straw for the stooks.

The rule of the camp is plain living, cheeriness and hard work.

Our Commandant blows the *réveille* on his whistle at 6.30 in the morning. After breakfast the various squads go off with lunch in their haversacks to their duties. The farmer's wife provides an excellent Cumbrian tea in the afternoons. Supper is at 7.30, bed-time 9.30, lights out 10 p.m.

The camp itself is charmingly situated. The mess tent is on the haugh, or meadowland, between the swollen Derwent—hurrying down from Derwentwater and



AT THE OUTLET OF BASSENTHWAITE LAKE—DRAINING THE PASTURES.

suspicion, and it is reported Cockermouth way that the farmers believed the "young fellers" to be Reformatory Schoolboys in the first instance, and were not reconciled till they learned that their education had run into high figures. Now, the boys themselves, as the writer knows by observation, are as courteous and alert as possible—keen as Boy Scouts to "do a good turn" to anybody—but this by itself would not have availed had not the Camp Commandant himself

Bassenthwaite—and the tree-crowned hillside dominated by Cockermouth Castle at the western end. Just below the Castle the Cocker—hastening down Lorton vale from his “high mountain cradle” in Buttermere and Crummock waters—pours his stream into the Derwent. The sleeping tents are pitched on the hill above the haugh, and as one

turns in at night one may give a last look upon the purple bastion of Grassmoor that guards the road southward to Buttermere. A big, empty barn close by provides accommodation for luggage, bicycles, etc., while a piano, kindly lent by the Vicar, Mr. Parker, provides opportunity for sing-songs o’ nights.

THE ITALIAN CAPTURE OF MONTE SANTO AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

BY FERRUCCIO BONAVIA.

THE present moment is peculiarly favourable for a brief review of the tremendous blow delivered by General Cadorna’s troops in the Julian Alps, which led to results of the greatest military importance. It would be inaccurate to speak of a lull in the fighting; there is no such thing as a quiet sector now on any part of the Italian front, but the advance has paused momentarily, as the Italians, having advanced far beyond the support of their heavy artillery, are deprived of the only means known to modern generals for the preparation of new attacks. They must needs wait in consequence until their guns crown the newly conquered crests before they once more throw themselves forward. In the meantime, the enemy, who retired along his own line of communication, is launching desperate attacks daily in the vain hope of retarding the next blow, if not of actually breaking through the new Italian

centuries had been Austrian; they followed this up with an elaborate description of how the Italians captured Monte Santo, advancing into a “vacuum.” One would like to ask the hardly ingenious writer of these documents whether Trieste is less Italian in feeling to-day after bearing for centuries the yoke forced on her by Austria, or whether the Austrian army is so depleted of men that it could leave on the all-important positions of Monte Santo only the unattended guns which the Italians captured?

One of the most important features of the advance has been the part played by the Italian aeroplanes in preparing the attack. The great Caproni bombing machines visited daily the most important railway junctions and military depôts on the Carso, dropping tons of high explosives and returning, almost invariably, to their base without loss. The effect of this can be easily imagined. It considerably



The barrage of smoke under cover of which the Italians crossed the Isonzo. The Austrians frequently boasted that these positions were impregnable.

lines while they are still in process of organisation. Of the magnitude of the victory won by General Cadorna the bulletins, both Italian and Austrian, bear ample evidence; it is, in fact, rather interesting to compare the two—the Italian, sober and short, recounting eloquent captures of men, material and positions; the Austrian admitting not a loss or a retirement, but the “establishment of new positions,” hastily assuming that, for the day at least, “the victory remained with us.” From a reading of the Austrian bulletins one might almost come to the conclusion that the Austrian public at large is unprovided with maps, and believe that not the Italians, but the Austrians are advancing in enemy territory. Two typical examples of the Austrian Command’s desire to throw dust in the eyes of a sympathetic world occurred during this offensive. The first bulletin began with a whine about the Italians attacking country which for

retarded the arrival of ammunition, of men and of food supplies at the threatened points; it all but isolated the sectors it was designed to attack; and when, later, the Italian infantry advanced, the airmen again contributed their share to the success of the attack by swooping down on the retreating enemy, inflicting terrible losses and disorganising units. But the most important action in the air was fought over the great Istrian fortress of Pola. Over this naval base—one of the finest and most powerful in Europe—the squadrons of Capronis, protected by the quick fighting Nieuports, hovered long, bombing again and again the ships and the dockyards. It was during these actions that the poet Gabriele d’Annunzio received his second and third wounds—slight ones, as they happily proved. The result of this attack was shown a few days later when the Italian and English monitors sailed into the Gulf of Trieste to



The building of bridges under enemy fire has been one of the most trying operations the Italian army has had to accomplish. The photograph shows the pontoons over which are fastened the planks to enable the soldiers to cross "at the double."

bombard the massive Hermada defences and support from the sea the advance of the soldiers on land. Not an Austrian ship showed its nose that day outside the belt of islands which protects the Eastern coast of the Adriatic, nor was there a shot fired from any submarine, German or Austrian. The cumbrous and powerful monitors chose their objectives, corrected their aim and bombarded dockyard and trench, unharmed and unhindered.

The struggle on the Bainsizza plateau was unprecedented in the length of the front engaged, for the bitterness of the

fighting, for the natural advantages enjoyed by the enemy, and for the great results it led to. There are a large number of small hollows, cup-shaped, probably indistinguishable from an aeroplane, sometimes not bigger than a large shell crater, sometimes much wider, the very places where a gun, a machine gun battery or riflemen may be hidden. There are, besides, many grottoes where the defenders wait in absolute safety while the shells of the artillery strike the rock overhead with, perhaps, one chance in a thousand of hitting the narrow



The Italian flag on the summit of Monte Santo. It proclaimed the first great victory of the recent advance. Last spring the Italians reached the summit, but discovered that the position was untenable.

opening of the cave. These caverns and depressions of the ground are the greatest asset of the defenders. In addition, there was the stronghold of Monte Santo dominating Gorizia and the whole of the Italian position on this part of the Isonzo. Before attempting its conquest the Italians had to throw new bridges across the Isonzo—an operation always difficult and peculiarly so in this case as the Austrian guns had the range to an inch. It was all done in one night and concluded successfully, thanks to a successful stratagem. The Austrians had had ample time in the past to measure every inch of the country and verify their calculations, so that it is probable that even at night-time their fire, had they been aware of what was going on, might have made the work impossible. The Italians, to enable their engineers to work, had to make their opponents deaf and blind. This they did by keeping up a continuous fire and by flooding with the white rays of their searchlights the lines and observatory of the enemy, who, blinded by the light in his eyes, was utterly unaware of what was taking place down below. If the Austrians were out-generalled they were also out-fought. They resisted with the grim determination of a race which has been educated and fed on the hatred of its opponents; but nothing could withstand the devotion and the self-sacrifice of the Italian infantry who would not be denied. They advanced under a hurricane of shot and shell, they held on to their new positions regardless of sacrifice, and then started to clear the hiding-places in the rear, bearing thirst and suffering and privations with the fortitude and the stoicism of their Roman ancestors.

It has, too, confidently been assumed that Trieste forms Cadorna's strategic objective. This may be so—the

capture of Trieste, whose population, by the way, has been reduced, it is reckoned, to less than a third, would certainly have a great moral effect. But if the Italians were to push on and threaten Laibach closely, the Austrian Empire would feel the blow still more. The first would, perhaps, reconcile them to the loss of a rich province, of which, however, they never felt very sure politically; the second would shake the very foundations of empire. The advance on the Bainsizza plateau has also brought the Italians much closer to Tolmino, on which rests the right wing of the Austrian Army.

Great as the material advantages of the advance undoubtedly were, the moral advantages were even greater. Last month for the first time in history Italians met Austrians on equal terms. The result was for Austria a defeat heavier and more overwhelming than any she has suffered in this war.

Instead of exhausting the energy of the Italians the prolongation of the war seems to have increased and hardened it. It took them long to win the San Michele—the western fortress of Gorizia and the "Calvary of our Passion." The attack on Gorizia and the operations it involved show the great quickening in the rate of progress. Then the push of last spring came, still more rapid and decisive, and now the battle for the Bainsizza Plateau, the most thoroughly successful attack against positions naturally strong and heavily fortified yet delivered in this war. The battle is still in full swing. When at the end of October the cold Carisc winter puts an end to the actual fighting of masses the Italians will be ready to aim next spring at the very heart of Germany's strongest ally and Italia Irredenta will be redeemed.

A BIRD OF THE POND AND RIVER



MOORHENS.

IN the waterhen the late Mr. J. H. Symonds found a subject according to his heart. The bird is to be found precisely amid those scenes in which he loved to linger. Most of us have made its close acquaintance in childhood; at any rate, that was the case with the present writer. A slow river wound like some glittering great serpent through wide green meadows or haughs. Its banks were set with willows which had been originally planted for utilitarian purposes. Old men remembered when the withies were collected regularly for the purpose of making the various baskets used in a rural neighbourhood, from the reticule which the farmer's wife of those days carried as one of her

necessities to the swill employed mostly for carrying potatoes or other garden produce. Even the beehives in those days were manufactured in the village. It was long before the introduction of the wooden hive. The skep was then almost universally employed, as bee keepers had not yet wakened to the great advantage of abundance of space for their little charges or to the peril of disease engendered within these straw contrivances. The slender willows were used for binding purposes. But the willow as the raw material of an industry had become obsolete. The villagers had ceased to look upon these slight employments as a means of income. Whatever might be the result economically the charm added



MOORHEN FEEDING YOUNG.



TAKING FOOD TO NEST FOR HATCHED-OUT YOUNG.



MATE TAKING FOOD FOR YOUNG.

to the river was beyond compare and beyond dispute. The willows that had been cut and pollarded for generations, spread out into great bushy green masses or, if a trunk had been developed, it, like the one to which Ophelia referred, lay athwart the stream, a little circumstance which often led to the undoing of the waterhen's domestic work. The birds swam about among the dancing shadows which the restless leaves of the willow cast on the water, and in nesting time the beautiful structure made of dry flags and rushes was as often as not built on a fork of the projecting tree. It would have been unreachable except for the trunk of the tree, which formed a natural bridge, and the waterhen's nest was always regarded as one which it was permissible to harry. The mother is a persevering bird, and if of the four or five eggs which she laid all were abstracted but one, she would go on with the process and thus give almost as good a supply of eggs as a barn-door fowl. The willow, when half-rotted with age, often became the scene of curious tragedies. One Sunday morning we remember watching for some considerable time a fight between a stoat and an old rat, both of which had apparently been hankering after the nest of the waterhen—the rat for the eggs and the stoat for the bird. At least, that was what we thought—what was actually seen was a hard fight between the two conducted on the old willow bowl. Twice both combatants were submerged in the water, but they regained their foothold and resumed hostilities, which in the end resulted in the victory of the stoat, though the ancient rat had put up a good fight.

There was another scene that, perhaps, the waterhen liked even better than the river bank. The large meadows to which reference has been made were drained by open ditches where, towards the centre, great depression usually occurred. At the beginning of every autumn these ditches were thoroughly cleaned out, but in spite of that the rushes came up as vigorously as ever the next spring and formed a fine cover for aquatic wild life. The waterhens used to form runs between the rushes very similar to those made by rabbits on grassland, with this essential difference, that whereas the marks were left on the ground by the patter of the rabbits' feet, the traces of the waterhen were not on the water but on the rushes, which, being continuously pushed

aside by the swimming birds, assumed the appearance of a tunnel. There were yellow sedges, too, that grew up in abundance, and it was always safe to look out for the nest in the rushes or among the sedges. When winter reduced all this lush green foliage to withered rustling stalks there was not much concealment left and the birds with the nestlings they had reared ran back to the river. But in winter they were not lost sight of. The waterhen in hard weather suffers far more than some other birds. There was not a long frost occurred which did not cause many deaths among them, and it was easy to measure their hunger by their bones. Shy as they are in summer, when the ground was hard and ringing with the Christmas frosts, they would come up to the house and either take their place among the birds that were regularly fed on the lawn or go among the poultry and share their food. During all the time of long nights and short days they were frequently to be found haunting the farmyard and even the stacks. Hunger had the effect of making them very amenable to human approach. Many a one has the present writer tamed and made into a confidant and familiar pet by a judicious use of food in hard times. They used to steal from some hiding-place at the foot of the evergreen hedge or elsewhere out into the crowd of quarrelling and hungry birds while they were being fed and at first were among the most timid; but gentleness and patience soon gave them

he shared with that artist of the pen, Mr. Richard Jefferies. In every case it will be observed that the birds are at home and conducting themselves as they only do when unconscious of any observation. The camera may have been at work either on a pond or a river; from the foliage we should imagine it was the former. In that case the nest is safer from floods. We remember in boyhood many cases in which a nest built on the willows was floated away with the mother bird sitting patiently on it. It was a saying in the neighbourhood to which we refer that there must always be at least one May flood; and this flood arrived at a most unpropitious time for the animals that lived on the river bank. The rabbits were driven out of their holes by the water, and sometimes took refuge on a piece of higher ground completely surrounded by the flood. Their escape then was impossible, because the village lads waded in with their dogs and secured them for the pot. Occasionally a hare was caught in the same way. Rats and water-shrews, forced out of the holes with which they had mined the embankment of the river, fell an easy but exciting prey to the terriers. But the nest of the moorhen floated away undisturbed till it came to the mill dam, over which the water poured in a miniature cataract. Then only did the brave mother give up hope. After that point the nest, void of its eggs, could still be seen floating seaward, while its disconsolate owner began making her way back to her



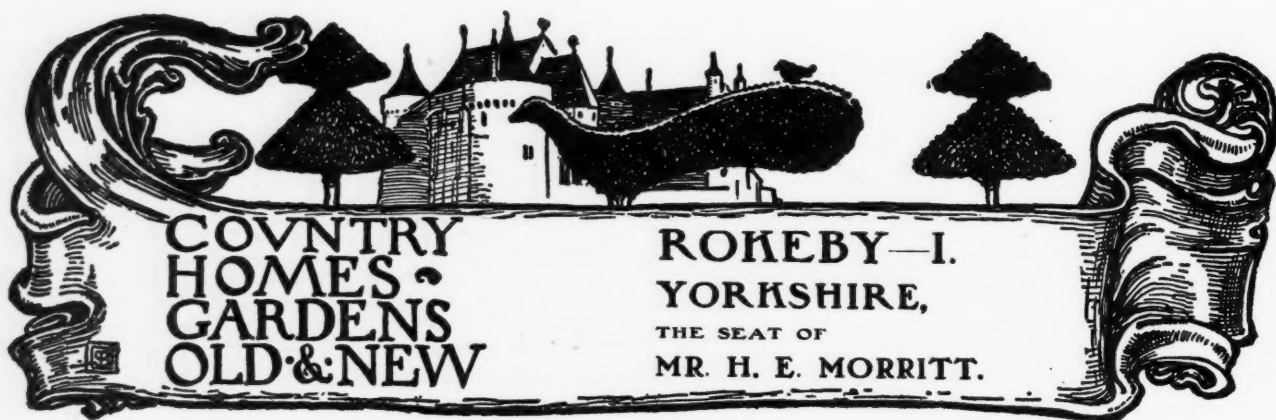
FEEDING YOUNG IN MID-STREAM.

confidence till they would come up quite boldly and claim their share of the provisions. It used to be a final triumph when one could be induced to eat out of the hand. Londoners will not find it very difficult to believe this, because the waterhens in Hyde Park, by dint of continual feeding, have become as tame as the wood-pigeons or the sparrow.

These inoffensive little birds were very little troubled by the sportsman or the farmer. The former did not consider them worth powder and shot. Either in flight or when swimming they offer an easy mark. It is curious, by the bye, that when roused on a pond they fly as though it were a great difficulty, skimming just a little above the water with their feet often stirring and their wings continuously flapping. But on the other hand, it has been shown that they make long and high migratory flights, as they have been caught at the windows of lighthouses and other places where the voyaging bird occasionally comes to grief. At home in a pastoral country, however, we do not remember ever seeing a waterhen take a strong high flight.

We do not know the exact locality in which the late Mr. Symonds took the photographs with which this article is illustrated; but, wherever they were obtained, whoever is familiar with the bird will recognise at once that they are absolutely true to life. We can easily imagine the photographer waiting and watching with the patience that

old haunts. The peace and security of the first picture is in direct contrast to this stormy finish. The next one is very much of the same kind, except that it shows very clearly the eggs and the woolly little young in occupation of the same home. Then comes a delightful photograph of the moorhen taking food to the nest for the hatched-out young; a little idyll of the waterside. In the next picture is illustrated the fact that the cock bird is a very faithful parent. Why birds should differ in this way is a question often asked, but the fact is that it can only be recorded that some, like the cock pheasant, are utterly careless of their offspring, while others, like the cock partridge, are faithful to the very death. Finally we have the little woolly black chicks—or seemingly black, as closer observation would show shadings of colour—being fed on the water. Henceforth they fare about in the world of their parents, returning no more to the nest. They soon learn to become very active and wary, these qualities having been imparted to them by the experience of centuries. Nearly all the little beasts of prey appear to have a special fondness for water birds. The weasel and the stoat will lie in wait and jump in among the rushes to seize them, and even the bigger fox does not disdain them as a tit-bit. Another enemy that they can scarcely guard against is the pike, whose hungry maw absorbs many a chick in the course of the season.



ROKEBY is not only a glorious park and countryside sung by Sir Walter Scott, or the home for a hundred years of a famous Velasquez picture now at the National Gallery. It is also a house of much architectural interest, built by a wealthy patron of the arts and leader of social functions in the days of the first two Georges. His period of ownership is a late chapter in a long history of the place which begins with the day when the Romans, engineering a road up to Carlisle, made a *trajectus* to take it over the River Greta close to where the picturesque eighteenth century bridge (Fig. 5) now spans the leafy gorge.

At the time when John Morritt, traveller, classic scholar, and friend of Scott, purchased the Rokeby "Venus," Thomas Whitaker, Vicar of Whalley and antiquary, was preparing his "History of Richmondshire," and thus summed up his account of Rokeby: "This little parish, rich in natural scenery, adorned by modern elegance, distinguished by the site of a Roman station, and the remains of a religious house, but still more distinguished by a line of patriots and soldiers in its lords, has in later days been the retirement and the theme of great poets."

To secure their *trajectus* and house soldiers on the march the Romans established a settlement close by. Various remains, such as votive altars, were found and carefully preserved. At so out of the way a spot Roman art would not be of a high quality and Whitaker speaks of the Greta remnants as "rude" compared to the collection of similar objects brought home by Morritt from classic lands. But as survivals of a link in the elaborate chain of military posts that ensured the Roman dominion in Britain they have their importance. They call to mind how the troubles at the centre of the Empire

gradually led to a removal of links, the weakening of the chain and the ultimate abandonment of the dominion. The veil of darkness and silence falls for centuries over the hilly tract through which Tees and Greta, meeting at Rokeby, have cut their rocky paths. It is of a far different political and social state that the next surviving works of man tell us. Mortham Tower and Egliston Priory, the dwelling and burial places of the Rokeby knights, bring home to us the civil and religious life of Teesdale in mediaeval times. Egliston (Fig. 4), standing high on the cliff of the Tees where the Thorsgill beck runs into it, was a little priory of White Canons, founded by Ralph de Multon towards the close of the twelfth century. The picturesque remains of its church are Early English in style and show that the work of the first priors and canons was not superseded by their successors as in the case of the majority of religious houses that reached wealth and influence. Egliston remained poor and obscure, and, perhaps, on that account all the more virtuous. Anyhow, when the lesser houses were dissolved in 1536, Egliston was permitted to continue, and only finally succumbed when monasticism ceased three years later. Meanwhile neighbouring knights had found there a final resting place, the local marble of the river bank forming the material of their monuments. Leland, visiting it shortly after the Dissolution, noted two of them as being "very faire tumbes of gray marble. In the greater was buried, as I learned, one Syre Rafe Bowes. And in the lesser one of the Rokebys." At the Dissolution the entire gross annual value was found to be £65 5s. 6d., and the property, after passing through several lay hands when the domestic buildings were converted into a dwelling, was joined to the Rokeby Estate during the Robinson ownership.



Copyright.

1.—THE HOUSE FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

2.—THE HOUSE FROM THE SOUTH-EAST.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

3.—MORTHAM TOWER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

4.—EGLISTON PRIORY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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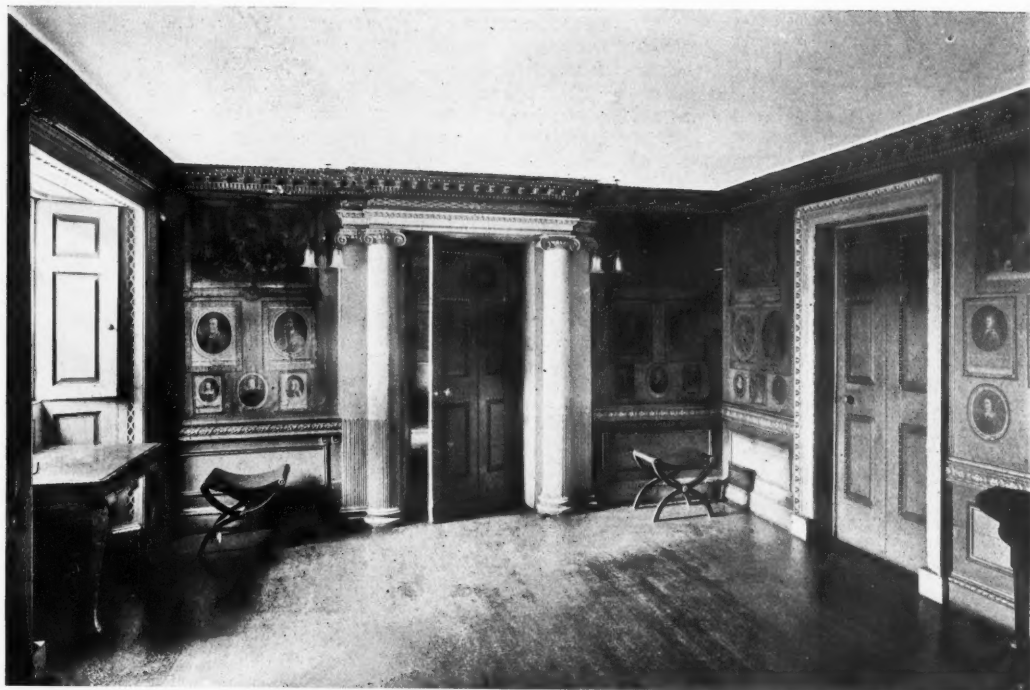
5.—GRETA BRIDGE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The Rokebys of Rokeby, like their neighbours the Bowes of Streatlam (*COUNTRY LIFE*, December 18th, 1915), were a line of strenuous and capable men in the forefront of the fighting that ever swayed backwards and forwards on both sides of the Scottish border. Under a weak king struggling with home troubles the Scots would come far south, and so we hear that under Edward II the Rokebys' early mediæval home was burned in the successful raid after Bannockburn. But under Edward III the tables were turned, and Sir Thomas Rokeby was one of the English leaders at the Battle of Nevill's Cross who "gave the Scots such a draught as they did not care to taste again." His capacity led to more important and distant employment, and he was Justiciar of Ireland for half a dozen years before he died in 1356. He sought to deal fairly by the natives and not meet his needs when campaigning by loot. So when he was chaffed for drinking out of "homely cupps," he answered, "I had rather drink out of these cupps and paye gold and silver, than drinke out of golde and make wooden payments."

Two centuries later his descendant Ralph Rokeby was an Elizabethan lawyer and Master of Requests. To teach his nephews their family history he wrote "*Œconomia Rokebeiorum*," which Whitaker prints in full. Here we learn that after the Scots laid low the ancient family house in 1312 a new one was "builded upon the Knopp of the hill within two flight shotts of the old house and within a roveing shott of the meeting of the two rivers Tease and Greta where yet unto this day continueth (God be thanked) the house of our whole familye and parentage." Under the Stewarts Rokebys gave way to Robinsons, but Mortham Tower, though nothing of the fourteenth century remains, still rears its crenellated head above the buildings that form the surrounding farmery (Fig. 3). It is described by Whitaker as "an embattled house, probably built about the reign of Henry VII; a true Border mansion with all the peculiar features of that era and rank of domestic architecture; a through lobby; kitchens to the left hand, with arched doors out of the lobby and butteries; a hall on the right hand up to the roof, and a handsome tower beyond the hall. At one end is a barnekyn inclosure for the nightly

protection of the cattle from depredators, strongly walled about with stone." It remained to the Rokebys till their final ruin during the Civil War, when it passed to the Robinsons, who seem already to have acquired the rest of the Rokeby lands. Speaking of the Robinson who became Archbishop of Armagh and Lord Rokeby, the "Dictionary of National Biography" traces his descent from a Robinson settled in Kendal in the reign of Henry VII whose eldest son, Ralph, became owner of Rokeby by marriage with a co-heiress. But Whitaker tells us that William Robinson, "merchant of the City of London," bought it in the early half of the seventeenth century, and an inscription, formerly on a gate-pier, states that he acquired Brignal Manor in 43 Eliz., Rokeby in 8 James I, and most of Mortham five years later. He resided at Rokeby, which he in some measure rebuilt, but Thomas Robinson, sixth in descent from him, coming home from Italy a convinced Palladian, set about re-housing himself in classic style. Born about 1700, he was a few years junior to the Earl of Burlington, who returned from Italy in 1716 and at once became the patron and leader of the group of architects who, through the mouth of the author of the "Vitruvius Britannicus," declared: "It is, then, with the Renowned Palladio we enter



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6.—THE BREAKFAST ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



Copyright.

7.—THE MUSIC ROOM.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the Lists." Before he came of age, and before he returned from his Continental tour, Thomas Robinson inherited the Rokeby Estate and a goodly fortune. He at once set to work to adorn the former and dissipate the latter. His travels had been wider than those of the majority of the gilded youths of his time for whom the Continent was the usual "finishing school." We hear that he had been "over Europe," had studied the antique in Greece and Rome, and absorbed the spirit of Italian Renaissance architecture. He thus acquired a taste that "dominated the rest of his life," and the gratification of which was the chief cause of his financial downfall.

Among the architects whom he found practising on his return was the Yorkshireman William Wakefield. We know very little of him. Was he Vanbrugh's understudy

The Door and Windows in the principal Story are Semi-circular; the Attick is only over the middle Part of the Building and has Square Windows, and concludes with an Entablature and Ballustrade. The Apartments are convenient, as the Plan more fully expresseth. It is designed by William Wakefield Esq Anno 1724.

There is not much resemblance between this design and the existing house (Fig. 1). There are no pilasters or round-headed windows. There is no entablature or balustrade set with vases, and the attic floor extends over the whole block and not merely over the central three windows. There is no great flight of steps, and the central aperture of the "principal Story" is a window and not a door. A contemporary engraving of "the Seat of Sir Thomas Robinson, Bart.," does, however, show that this door existed and was approached up a double flight of steps much in the manner

of Lord Burlington's Chiswick Villa and of many another Palladian house of the period. Between the spring of the two flights was an opening through which the door of the humbler ground floor was approached. In most other respects the engraving presents the house as we still find it, showing that the alterations and additions mentioned by Whitaker as having been effected by the Morritts were not as extensive as he implies. They removed the steps, set up the Doric portico and made the ground floor the only means of entrance. They also added a storey to the east wing, but in every other respect the outer aspect is exactly the same now as when the engraving was done for Sir Thomas Robinson. It appears that he placed his new house close to where—"two flight shotts" away from Mortham—had stood the old Rokeby home burnt by the Scots, of which "the Chapell and doorways and the groundsells of the walls" were yet remaining when Ralph Rokeby wrote his "*Œconomia*" under Elizabeth. One of the inscriptions formerly on the gate piers tells us that between the years 1725 and 1730 Robinson not only built his



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8.—THE SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

at Castle Howard, and did he act in the same capacity at neighbouring houses that tradition assigns to Vanbrugh? Concerning the Yorkshireman we merely hear from Francis Drake, who published his "*Eboracum*" in 1736, that before that date there lay "as yet without any memorial" in the Church of St. Michel-le-Belfry "that worthy gentleman William Wakefield, Esquire, whose great skill in architecture will always be commended as long as the houses of Duncombe Park and Gilling Castle stand." To him Thomas Robinson applied for a design for his proposed new house in Yorkshire, and that design was included by Campbell in the third volume of his "*Vitruvius Britannicus*" with the following description:

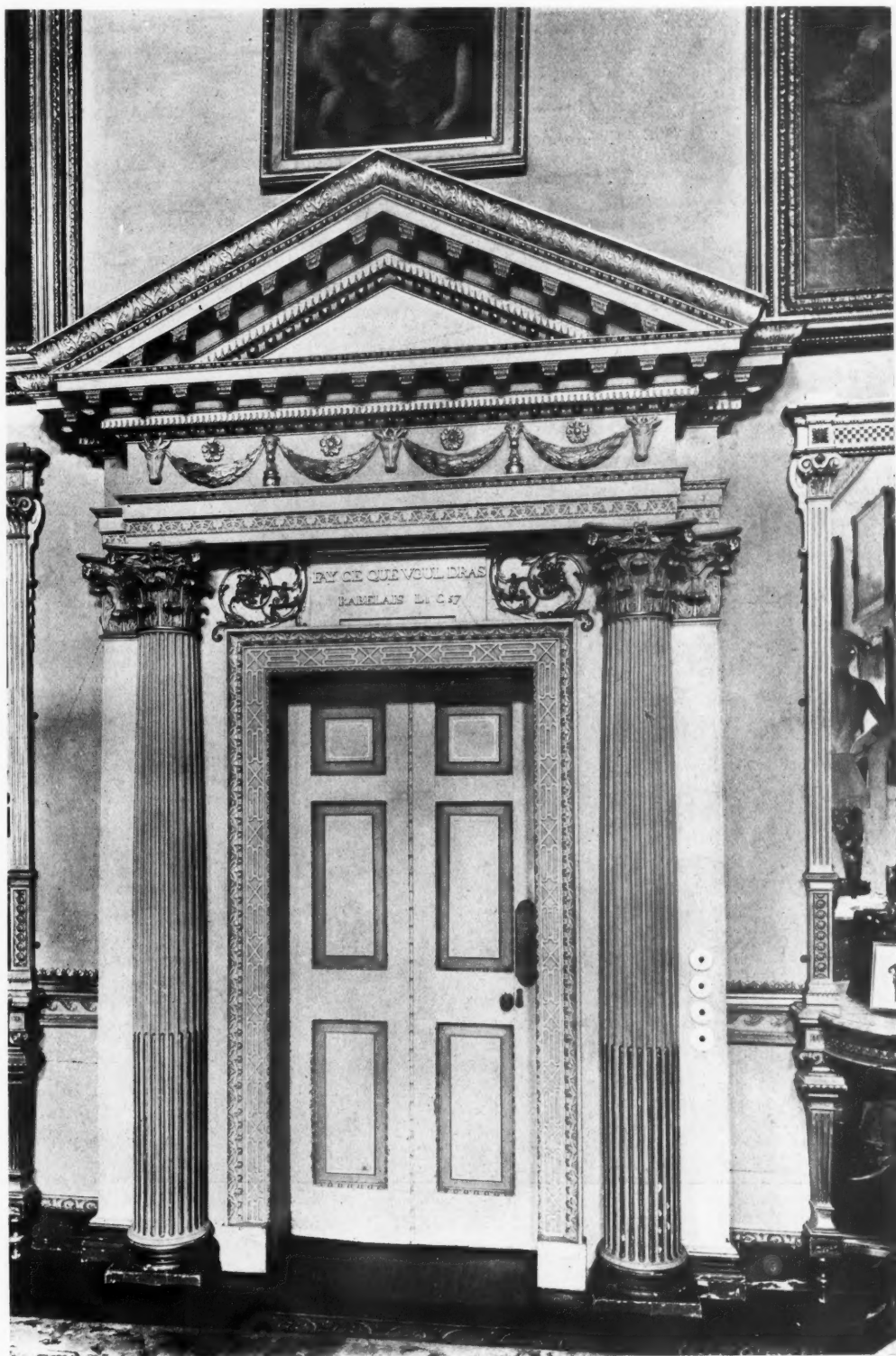
Rookby Park—The Front extending 96 Feet and supports a Corinthian Ordinance, consisting of 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ Columns and 2 Pillasters 3 Feet in Diameter.

house, but enclosed the park with a wall and replanted it. He also built Greta bridge as the approach to his park entrance, so that, despite the Morritt alterations, the Dictionary of National Biography is right in saying that: "He practically made the Rokeby of which Sir Walter Scott wrote and which the tourist visits."

During the same period he entered Parliament, and in the very church where his architect was to be buried he married a daughter of the third Earl of Carlisle, which accounts for his having designed the west wing of Castle Howard. In 1731 he obtained a baronetcy and for ten years after remained a well known figure in London society, often mentioned by diarists and letter writers such as Horace Walpole. The latter gives an account of a juvenile ball he got up for a young daughter of the Duke of Richmond in 1741, to which two

hundred guests were invited, "from Miss in bib and apron to my lord chancellor in bib and mace." Two months later another and bigger ball was given, but creditors were getting tiresome and making absence from England desirable. One of the Ministers, who coveted his house in Whitehall, "secured for him in January, 1742, the post of Governor of Barbadoes." There he rebuilt his residence and constructed an armoury and arsenal which, though they may have been useful enough, were objected to by the Assembly, whom he had not consulted and who left him to pay the bill. This may have led to his second marriage out there with the widow of Samuel Solomon, a rich ironmonger. But when he was recalled to England in 1747 she preferred to remain in the West Indies. This probably suited Sir Thomas, who seems to have got money enough to once more cut a dash in society and "again give balls and breakfasts." He acquired a large interest in Ranelagh Gardens, and, becoming the director of entertainments, his knowledge of the fashionable world and aptitude for entertaining made them a huge success and enabled him to give grand feasts on his own account in a house he built close by, and where he died in 1777. It would have added to the gaiety of the social history of his time had his correspondence—much of it with Lord Chesterfield—come down to us. But though he kept it all and desired an apothecary who had married his natural daughter to publish it after his death, his brother and their, occupying the dignified position of Archbishop of Armagh, thought well to intervene and the publication was stopped. But we know him as one of the figures in Hogarth's picture of the "Beggars' Opera" and as the "certain long English baronet of infinite wit, humour and gravity" whom Fielding mentions in "Joseph Andrews" as the original of the face on that hero's cudgel. His height caused him to be nicknamed "Long Sir Thomas" to distinguish him from his namesake, the diplomatist who became Lord Grantham. The oddity of his dress was made more conspicuous by his size, for he often clad himself in hunting dress, a postilion's cap, a light green jacket and buckskin breeches. Thus attired, he set out to visit a married sister in Paris. Arriving when she was entertaining company at dinner, one of the guests, hearing his name, exclaimed: "Pardon, sir, are you the famous Robinson Crusoe so remarkable in history?"

In 1731—that is, soon after he had completed Rokeby—Sir Thomas Robinson was the guest of Sir Robert Walpole at Houghton, which had been building at the same time and remains as the most complete and sumptuous of our Early Georgian houses. Writing to his brother-in-law, Lord Carlisle, at Castle Howard, Sir Thomas describes Houghton as "the best in the world of its size in capability for reception and convenience of State apartments." In a smaller way he had been aiming at the same result at Rokeby. The Italian



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9.—PRINCIPAL DOORWAY OF THE SALOON.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

influence was entirely antagonistic to mere domesticity. The ground floor was low and none too well lighted, although here were located the ordinary family living-rooms. It was designed as a mere undercroft to the *piano nobile* which contained the State apartments and was the chief consideration of the architect in designing both plan and elevation. Rokeby, being a house of modest dimensions, had only one great room, and not a great hall and saloon occupying back to back the centre of the house. The Rokeby saloon (Fig. 8),

originally entered from the outside by Sir Thomas's flights of steps, takes up an unusually large proportion of the house space, being a good deal deeper than it is wide and of two-storeyed height. The room behind it (Fig. 7), known as the music-room, is therefore shallow but of excellent proportions. It retains much of its original work, such as mantelpiece, doorways, dado and cornice, all of fine form and good enrichment, but the plate glass in the Venetian window and other modern introductions deprive it of much of the merit it might have possessed in the time of Sir Thomas's ownership. The same remarks apply also to the saloon, but happily in a lesser degree, as the subsequent treatment is by no means so pronounced. The whole of the woodwork is well and boldly finished, culminating in the principal doorway (Fig. 9). It is very similar to the entrance door of the Houghton saloon, although Sir Thomas had to be satisfied with pine as a material and could only envy the "vast quantity of mahogany" that

his new Mayfair House in 1749. Others are at Ragley Hall and Downton Hall, both some half a dozen years later. The example at Rokeby is rather akin to these than to those designed by Robert Adam after George III became King. It does not therefore necessarily date from the Morritt occupation, but rather, with the doorway, implies that Sir Thomas's finances did not permit him to fit up his saloon before his Barbadoes period, but that the temporary flush of good fortune that marked the first years of his connection with Ranelagh enabled him to spend a little more at Rokeby before his unquenchable extravagance again threatened to submerge him. There is excellent work in the way of enriched doorways, window openings and dado rails in the rooms on either side of the saloon, and again in the breakfast-room (Fig. 6) that occupies the south-west corner downstairs. The principal doorway has the same pilaster and column arrangement as that in the saloon, but the lowness

of this undercroft has rightly led to the adoption of the Ionic Order supporting an entablature that has a mere roll moulding for frieze. The fret in the window recesses, the guilloche in the dado rail, the egg and tongue in door architraves and panels, the modillions in the cornice, all join to give an agreeable richness to the room, of which the wall spaces are very amusingly treated. On a well balanced and thought out hanging scheme a large collection of eighteenth century engravings has been pasted up, enclosed in engraved borders representing the gilt frames usual at the period. Of Rokeby's more recent history the account must be deferred till next week.

H. AVRAY TIPPING.

THE RUSSIAN PEASANT

THE poem "Who can be Happy and Free in Russia?" by Nicholas Nekrassov, Translated by Juliet M. Goskice.

Milford, is exceptional in that it has lost but little of its power, thanks to the ability with which the translator has rendered it into English; and it will be of peculiar interest at the present time when the point of view of the Russian peasant has become a matter of importance with the peoples of the Allies. Nekrassov is the poet of his people's sorrow, and his works have wide popularity in his own country. The first few lines of his poem, satirical but impressive, demonstrate the down-trodden condition of the peasantry before the Revolution. The manners, customs and feasts of the country folk, as well as their poverty, are brought

in a realistic manner before the reader. There is sarcasm in a passage where a serf is supposed to address his master, a landowner, thus:

"Our tumble-down hovels, our weak little bodies,
Ourselves, we are yours, we belong to our Master.
Our ancestors fallen to dust in their coffins,
Our feeble old parents who nod on the oven,
Our little ones lying asleep in their cradles
Are yours—are our Master's, and we in our homes
Use our wills but as freely as fish in a net."

That the peasants have kindly hearts is shown when one of them liberates a lark caught and entangled in the flax:

"The lark flies away to the blue heights of Heaven;
The kind hearted peasants gaze lovingly upwards
To see it rejoice in the freedom above."

When speaking of the floggings which the peasants were in the habit of receiving from their masters, the poet describes them as nothing compared with those inflicted by Germans who were often employed as managers of the landowners' estates, and who were bullies of the worst kind.



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10.—CHIMNEYPiece.

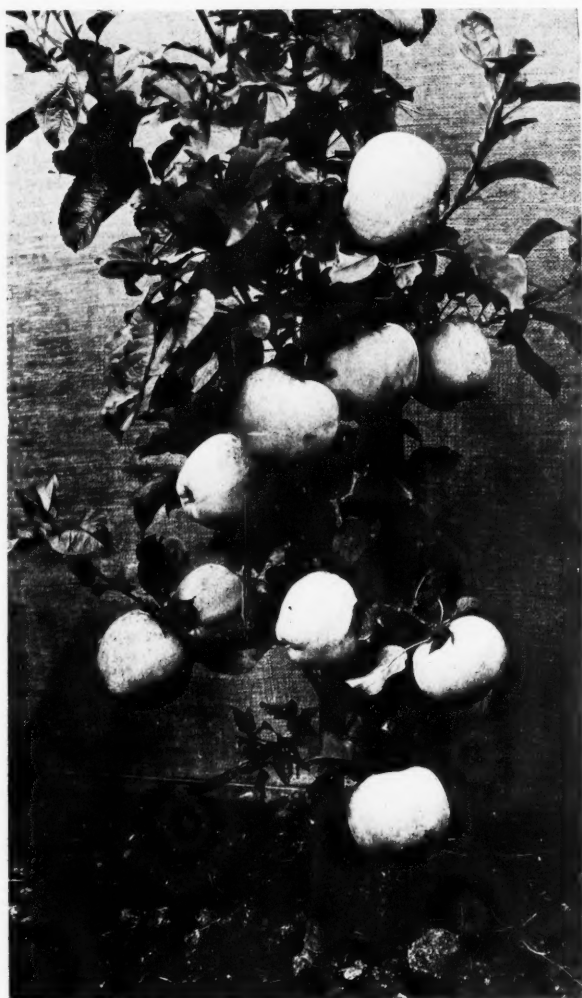
the wealthy Prime Minister lavished at Houghton. But the design and the style and richness of the decoration are very similar. The substitution in the principal pediment moulding of a device somewhat resembling the classic honeysuckle in place of the acanthus, and of a "Chinese fret" in the flat of the architrave give individuality to the Rokeby example, and seem to place it at a rather later date than 1730. This is still more true of the very fine marble mantelpiece (Fig. 10), which is not without Adam characteristics. It is true that the saloon mantelpiece at Houghton has the same detached columns with the entablature breaking forward over them. It is also true that the architrave of the fire opening has the boldly treated egg and tongue motif so characteristic of Early Georgian work. But much of the detail of both design and ornament is such as we find only when the eighteenth century was entering its second half. An early example in this manner was introduced by Lord Chesterfield in

IN THE GARDEN

THE CROP OF FRUIT.

WE all know that this is a good fruit year. It is almost, if not quite, a record year for Pears, and there is an abundance of Apples in most parts of the country. As a nation we are beginning to recognise the immense food value of our fruit crops. For a long time fruit has been looked upon more as a luxury than as a wholesome and natural food. We fail to understand why.

Nevertheless, there is a great waste of fruit throughout the land. Windfalls are rotting where they fall: they are useful for cooking. No sugar, we are told. But a good Apple needs no sugar. There is too much talk about the sugar shortage and the depletion of labour. To a great extent waste is the result of negligence. A bough is left overloaded with fine fruit until broken down in a gale—a sad calamity, we are told; whereas the judicious thinning of the fruit or a timely prop would have

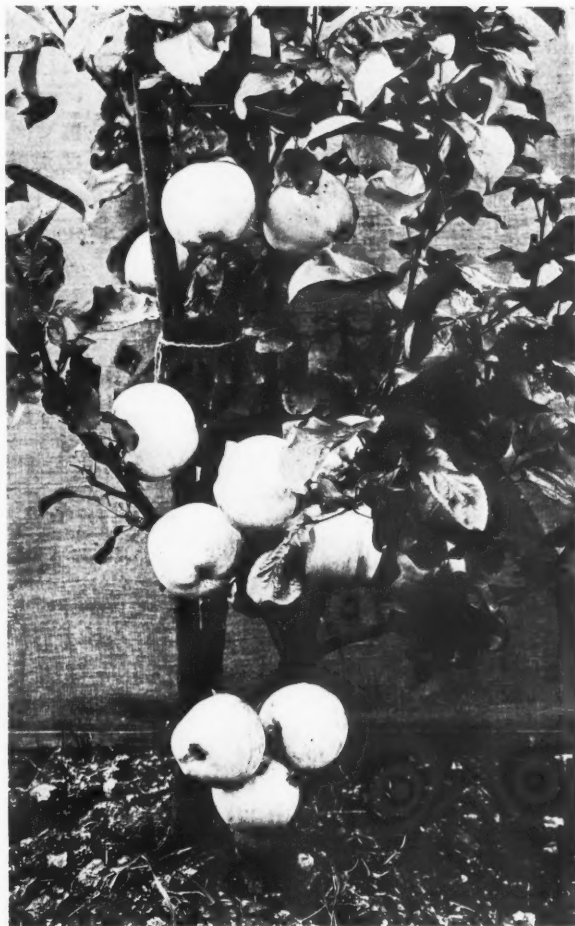


A FOUR YEAR OLD TREE OF ROYAL JUBILEE.
A prolific variety.

saved the situation. This is not the time to leave things to chance. Every man and woman must regard it as a point of honour to save the fruit crop while there is yet time. The gathering and storing of fruits is largely a question of common sense. There are, however, a few points to which attention might be directed with advantage.

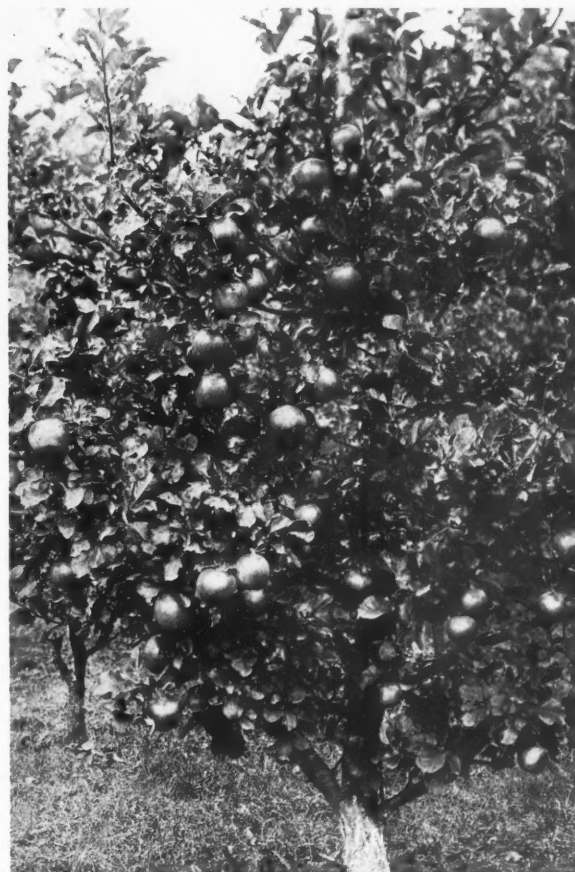
Gathering the Crop.—A common mistake in fruit-picking is to strip a tree of its entire crop at one gathering. The fruits do not all ripen at the same time; it is therefore only by making several pickings that they are gathered in the best condition. This is particularly the case with Plums, which ripen very irregularly, but it also applies to the Apple and Pear.

The keeping qualities of fruit for storing depend so much on the condition of the fruits when they are taken from the trees that it seems hardly necessary to dwell upon the care necessary in handling the fruit that is to be stored. There are very few Pears that ripen on the tree, the old Jargonelle being one of the exceptions. Pears must therefore be ripened indoors. A cool,



REV. W. WILKS.
Early maturing cropper.

dark place, well ventilated and of uniform temperature, is the most suitable. To test whether the fruits are ready to pick.



NEWTON WONDER.
One of the best.

take a fruit in the palm of the hand and raise it gently. If ready the stalk will part quite easily.

Early Dessert Apples.—The writer is acquainted with one of the best judges of fruit in the country, who never gathers his early eating Apples at all, or, at any rate, only the last of the crop. Early Apples lose much of their flavour and crispness if kept indoors even for a week. By leaving them to fall naturally they are obtained in the proper order of ripening. Of course, if the crop be a very heavy one, it must be gathered, or there may be a great deal of waste.

Apples Fruiting on Young Trees.—By grafting the Apple on to the broad-leaved Paradise stock and transplanting the trees annually our nurserymen have succeeded in getting almost any Apple to fruit in a few years. For example, that excellent Apple Blenheim Orange is often passed over at planting time because it is reputed to be very slow in coming into bearing. Instances may be cited where trees have not borne a crop until attaining the age of twenty to twenty-five years. While this is true of standard trees grown upon Crab stock, it is possible to secure a crop even of this variety in four years by using the Paradise stock. That precocious variety the Rev. W. Wilks is capable of cropping as a maiden tree—that is, in its first year—and by the time it attains the age of four it is not unusual for it to carry a score of handsome fruits. An interesting feature of these young trees is the exceptionally large size of the fruits they bear.

A few of the best cooking Apples for keeping are Bramley's Seedling, Annie Elizabeth, Newton Wonder, Norfolk Beefing, Blenheim Orange, Wellington and Schoolmaster. The writer has at the present time (September 17th) a few remaining fruits

of the 1916 crop of Annie Elizabeth. This is a grand Apple grown as a standard on the Crab stock, and comes in useful for dessert from May onwards. These fruits have been stored on the floor in a loft. Had they been placed in a specially constructed fruit room with an earth floor, the fruits would, if necessary, keep quite well until the gathering of next season's crop. The variety Schoolmaster is an old one that should find a place in every garden—it always carries a crop, whatever the season may be.

Of the dessert Apples for storing, the following, among others, provide a useful source of food during the winter: Cox's Orange Pippin, Sturmer Pippin, Allington Pippin, Fearn's Pippin, Scarle's Nonpareil, Adam's Pearmain, Ribston Pippin and Charles Ross.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SEEDLING ORANGES AND LEMONS.

SIR,—I have about half a dozen orange and lemon trees in my greenhouse, grown from pips. They are tall and vigorous and thrive well, but I am told they will never bear fruit unless they are treated in some way or other. Can you tell me whether this is so, and what ought to be done to them?—E. M. POWELL.

[For flowering and fruiting purposes seedling oranges and lemons are practically useless. Only good fruiting varieties are worth growing for their fruits. It is usual to raise seedlings for the purpose of stocks on which to bud or graft the best fruiting varieties, but even as non-flowering plants the seedlings have a fine appearance by reason of their handsome foliage. Should you decide to use the seedlings as stocks, the soil should be firmly rammed around the roots some months before budding or grafting, otherwise the growth may be too sappy to ripen properly. These plants need a minimum temperature of 50deg. in winter and a good deal of light; the dark slate-roofed houses of former days are very unsuitable.—ED.]

LITERATURE

A BOOK OF THE WEEK

The Soul of a Bishop, by H. G. Wells. (Cassell.)

MR. WELLS has written this book in his rôle of interpreter of the age we live in. The particular point of his interpretation is the effect of the war and the circumstances that led up to it on religious belief. His thesis is that the Church of England has lost touch with reality. Upon this foundation he has built up a novel which, although almost exclusively concerned with the "innards" of a bishop, is eminently readable. The Bishop of Princhester is undoubtedly an engaging character, not very intellectual, not very decided or resolute, but in his weakness and vacillation very human. As a serious contribution to thought or teaching, we do not think so much of the book. The bishop himself is undoubtedly a man alike in his strength and his weakness, his searchings of heart and his frankness, but he is not very recognisable as a bishop. At any rate, he does not correspond to any other portraiture of the fraternity which has a place in literature. He could not have been easily fitted in to the cathedral town which Anthony Trollope loved to depict, and his place is not to be found among those whom Carlyle classed compendiously as the "Shovel-hatted." Moreover, he does not in the end, as far as we can see, bring himself into touch with those realities which are insisted upon with almost wearisome iteration by the novelist.

The best piece of diagnosis in the book is that of the condition of labour to-day. Beginning with the perfectly true statement that "Since the passing of Victoria the Great there had been an accumulating uneasiness in the national life," he goes on to remark that at her death it seems as if a heavy paper-weight had been lifted from people's ideas, with the consequence that they began to "blow about" anywhere. Then follows this salient passage:

Not that Queen Victoria had really been a paper-weight or any weight at all, but it happened that she died as an epoch closed, an epoch of tremendous stabilities. Her son, already elderly, had followed as the selvedge follows the piece, he had passed and left the new age stripped bare. In nearly every department of economic and social life now there was upheaval, and it was an upheaval very different in character from the radicalism and liberalism of the Victorian days. There were not only doubt and denial, but now there were also impatience and unreason. People argued less and acted quicker. There was a pride in rebellion for its own sake, an indiscipline and disposition to sporadic violence that made it extremely hard to negotiate any reconciliations or compromises. Behind every extremist it seemed stood a further extremist prepared to go one better.

It looks as though in this passage Mr. Wells had originally thought of adumbrating a problem which faces the Church.

His bishop is appointed to a new see in the Black Country, where he comes into direct contact with the population thus described. A first-class intellect in the same position would have been stirred to great effort. Nothing is more apparent than that this new spirit calls for great and thoughtful statesmanship, the aim of which ought to be to absorb and weld into one community extremists of every kind. It points to the work of democratic leaders in the future. We have recently shown that a step in the right direction might be taken by accustoming children of all the different grades of society to meet one another in a State school which would serve equally for rich and poor; although there would be no reason against children whose parents had ambition of their own or children of exceptional promise continuing education in more specialised directions. That is to say, the change advocated would in no wise interfere with the secondary schools now in existence.

But the bishop fails to see that he and the Church might usefully take a great part in this work of reconstruction. He accepts the fate meted out to him by the moneyed Philistines of a manufacturing town. They look upon a bishop as a desirable ornament to their society, and regard the Church as an institution which they can patronise and reign over. They build him a gorgeous palace which is an abhorrence to his æsthetic soul; but when he endeavours to assume the place of a mediator between capital and labour, they brush him aside. As one of them says: "They don't believe you know anything about it, and they don't trust your good intentions. They won't mind a bit what you say unless you drop something they can use against us." This is one of the causes that prepare the way to a process of introspection which constitutes the body of the novel. Unfortunately, Mr. Wells makes use of a machinery which casts considerable doubts on the seriousness of his effort. The bishop becomes unhappy and unhealthy. He is afflicted by insomnia and general nervousness. Following the example set by King George at the beginning of the war, he had given up tobacco and wine, and when he became worried by his surroundings he developed a craving for both, but particularly for his favourite cigarette. Naturally, he sought the help of his family physician, Dr. Brighton-Pomfrey. But the latter had been called away on a mission and his place was taken up by a curious sort of crank: a lean, lank, dark young man with long black hair and irregular, rather prolonged features, who, after considering not so much the physical condition as the psychology of his patient, induced him to try the effect of "a distillate I have been trying. It isn't in the Pharmacopœia." Thus we get off at once into an atmosphere

of sorcery, and think of magic philtres and the elixir of life. Thus is the potion administered and taken :

Presently Dale had given him a little phial—and was holding up to the window a small medicine glass into which he was pouring very carefully twenty drops of the precious fluid. "Take it only," he said, "when you feel you must."

"It is the most golden of liquids," said the bishop, peering at it.

"When you want more I will make you more. Later, of course, it will be possible to write a prescription. Now add the water—so."

"It becomes opalescent. How beautifully the light plays in it!"

"Take it."

The bishop dismissed his last discretion and drank.

"Well?" said Dr. Dale.

"I am still here," said the bishop smiling, and feeling a joyous tingling throughout his body. "It stirs me."

The effect is described with the adroit use of detail for which Mr. Wells is famous. The new tonic brought the patient "complete reassurance, complete courage," just as though it had been a good stiff glass of brandy. We were oddly reminded of a character in a country town who used to say, especially at a funeral, that when he had a glass of brandy and a cigar, he felt like a duke. The description is homelier than Mr. Wells', but it is identically the same. We learn that the bishop "turned to walk towards Mount Street and Berkeley Square as a sultan might turn to walk among his slaves." The magical drink filled him with thoughts and dreams and eventually brought him into touch not, indeed, with God, as he desired, but with the Angel of God.

We will not linger over the further effects of this artifice, the introduction of which ruins the very similitude of the story. It has many results. After much wavering the bishop resigns his see, refuses the offer of a lady to build and endow for him a new temple in which he may preach the evangel at which he arrives.

We will but add one extract showing how Mr. Wells makes the Angel talk and behave :

"And the truth?" said the bishop, in an eager whisper. "You can tell me the truth."

The Angel's answer was a gross familiarity. He thrust his hand through the bishop's hair and ruffled it affectionately, and rested for a moment holding the bishop's cranium in his great palm.

"But can *this* hold it?" he said.

"Not with this little box of brains," said the Angel. "You could as soon make a meal of the stars and pack them into your belly. You haven't the things to do it with inside *this*."

He gave the bishop's head a little shake and relinquished it.

The book is serious in intention and promised something better than this, but the introduction of the philtre is so obviously an appeal to the gallery that it calls for no more comment. The bishop's renunciation of the things of this world may have put his soul at ease, but it leaves untouched the great problem with which he was brought face to face in the Black Country. And it is not at all convincing. Mr. Wells has every right to think out a religious problem for himself, and if the attenuated belief which he sets forth is that at which the bishop arrives is the honest conclusion at which he himself has arrived, he was quite entitled to make it the theme of his story. But the introduction of this philtre experiment plays havoc with the credibility of the tale.

LITERARY NOTES

MR. JOHN DRINKWATER must have been in a petulant mood when he wrote the "Note" which introduces *Pawns* to the reader. "But why Pawns, Mr. Drinkwater?" one asks, tempted into a digression before there is anything to digress from. "Little wooden Pankies" are the infantry of the chess strategist, the humblest of his forces. In a moment of inspiration (or despair) he will sacrifice his other pieces, his Queen, Rooks, Bishops and Knights, but he only gives up a pawn—to sacrifice a pawn would be as absurd as to "slaughter" a fly. But yet the pawn, if it "arrives," that is to say, gets into the eighth row, may become a Queen, Rook, Bishop or Knight. Did the author's thought take that turn when he invented the title? It is not on so delicate a theme I feel tempted to argue, but upon his irritable deliverance on Poetry and Drama. Let Mr. Drinkwater himself state what is

MR. DRINKWATER'S LAMENT.

Here are his own words: "For nearly two hundred years in England the poets very rightly have refused to work for a theatre that has sacrificed the drama to the actor, instead of so training its actors that they could honourably give the poet the supreme joy of seeing his work nobly and tenderly interpreted. The poets, in their chosen exile, have suffered; for dramatic imagination, deprived of its gathering to the theatre, cannot, even with a *Cenci* or an *Atalanta* for harvest, be wholly prosperous. But the loss to the theatre has been immeasurably greater; since the breach, English poetry has lost no splendour, but, with the exception of half a dozen plays at most, the drama of the theatre, until the last few years, has kept none."

No useful enquiry can be made into this without keeping in mind what Drama actually is. The Greek word originally meant action, and drama for the present purpose may be defined as an imitation of the actions and speech of men. The drama is for representation, the epic for narrative, the lyric for singing. Obviously the mere form cannot determine the genus to which a poem belongs. Many familiar lyrics are in the shape of questions and answers.

"How shall I your true love know
From another one?"

Innumerable are the tales related in the same way. Either the *Cenci* or *Atalanta*, judged as drama, would be justly condemned. During the last two hundred years there has been no "voluntary exile" of the poets from the stage. Their absence has been due to a lack of dramatic genius, and it makes no difference that they were unconscious of the fact. Tennyson was absolutely sure of being a playwright. He wrote many dramas. Henry Irving was most anxious to do them theatrical justice, no less for his own sake than because of his friendship with the illustrious Laureate. Audiences simply longed to admire and applaud. But the attempt failed because Tennyson in his dramas could not cunningly imitate the speech and wisely discern the motives of his characters. The lyrics introduced here and there by their exquisite finish shamed the crude attempt at writing dramatic poetry. Do the words of Mr. Drinkwater mean that Wordsworth with due encouragement could have revived the poetic glories of the stage, that Browning had any real dramatic faculty, that Morris could have been even a second-rate playwright? If not, who were the voluntary exiles? Keats, Coleridge? To name them is enough. The possession of a rare and fine poetic faculty is no guarantee of ability to write a drama.

Now let us apply the test to "The Storm," the first of the "Pankies." It belongs to a class of folk-play which was in vogue before the war. The conception is fine. No one disputes Mr. Drinkwater's lyric gifts, and here was an opportunity for their exercise. Let the reader imagine a snowstorm in hilly country. The good man has gone out and has not returned. His wife, anxious, but resolutely hopeful, awaits him. With her are Joan, a young sister and an ancient crone who is croakingly positive that the man is dead. It is a situation that reminds one of Andreeff's "Life of Man," though the Russian dramatist chose a birth and not a death for his main incident. With homeliness and fidelity he makes the ignorant midwife and her equally ignorant gossips speak on topics of Time and Eternity.

But Mr. Drinkwater spoils all by making the shepherd's wife talk like a book. In his best work Mr. Drinkwater eludes the faults of the minor poet, but if the most pregnant sayings of this rustic were printed anonymously, the language would certainly be mistaken for that of a lyrical in an indiscriminating mood. Here are a few selected at random:

"... the snow's like a black rain
Whipping the crying wind."

"... a savagery like this
Beats at the wits till they have no tidiness."

"We have,
My man and I, more than a fretful mood
Can thief or touch."

That is the language of no peasant yet born or of any other human being. At times we appear almost to see an original phrase peering through, as when she says:

"To remember the skill of my man among the hills
And how he would surely match their cunning with his."

"when most I need
To ride no borrowed sense."

"I am caught away from myself by the screaming thing
That scourges the hills."

"How she has nourished the dear fine mastery
That bids him daily down the busy road
And leaves her by the hearth."

No; Mr. Drinkwater has not yet realised his difficulties. It is not questioned that an anxious wife could think such thoughts, only that peasant lips never fashioned such speech as this. Yet Alice is outdone by a stranger. Was ever shelter asked and taken in terms like these?

"The Stranger: By Thor!
There's beauty trampling men like crumpled leaves.
May I come in till it's gone?"

Joan: Surely. I set
The Stranger:

Every sinew taut against this power,
This supple torrent of might that suddenly rose
Out of the fallen dusk and sang and leapt
Like an athlete of the gods frenzied with wine.
It seemed to rear challenging against me,
As though the master from Valhalla's tables,
Grown heady in his revels, had cried out—
Behold me now crashing across the earth
To shake the colonies of antic men
Into a fear shall be a jest, my fellows!"

The stranger who in real life opened a conversation with this rant would be set down by village folk as a lunatic. Mistake it not. The slow speaking but deep feeling rustic mind can at moments of crisis express more than there is here, but not in this diction.

An occasional divergence from the direct forcible richly idiomatic peasant language is unavoidable. It was into the mouth of Charles the common wrestler that Shakespeare put that unforgettable phrase: "They say many young gentlemen flock to him every day and fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world." P.

CORRESPONDENCE

A MACHINE TO SUPERSEDE THE PLOUGH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I quite agree with "Engineer" that the present system of drawing a plough behind a tractor is a very slow business. In many countries the disc plough is being rapidly developed with good results, but in the comparatively heavy land of this country it requires a great deal of power above that of the ordinary plough, being very heavy in draught. The only other thing at present is, I think, the steam cultivator (not plough) on the double engine system. This, on clean land, will prepare a good seed-bed, doing sometimes as much as twenty acres per day, thus getting over the work very quickly and economically. The same thing could be done with the large tractors of the caterpillar type, but at present this would cost far more than by using steam. I regret that up to the present I have not been able to find any machine that will even do without the old-fashioned horse plough, in many instances, although the old-fashioned broad share cultivator and "skim" are at times used to prepare wheat land without ploughing, either being operated by horses. I am watching every development of farm machinery, and am in touch with most manufacturers and compare notes with them. I only wish I could write on something more interesting.—H. B. TURNER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—"Engineer" has raised a rather interesting question in your issue of September 8th, but it is not clear why he has done so unless he has some kind of idea in his mind as to the practical possibility of substituting some sort of mechanical improvement on the plough in the method of turning over the soil. It is by no means a logical conclusion that quite a different mechanical method is feasible because some other old methods of doing work of various kinds have been superseded by others quite different in principle. In addition to the processes named by your correspondent, many more instances could be given to support his opinion, and one is inclined to receive with favour any suggestions as to the feasibility of a new method; and the fact that attempts that have already been made to attain such an object in the shape of mechanical diggers, etc., have apparently failed does not prove anything. All the same, it is difficult to conceive how the soil could be cut into and turned over efficiently by a moving instrument otherwise than on the principle of the best form of plough. What is really needed is deeper tilth than can at present be attained. Has this been attempted by means of a tandem plough following in the same furrow and deepening a roin. into a zoin. penetration? Another query is perhaps *à propos*. Have we sufficiently experimented with, or made use of, explosives in loosening the subsoil? While the value of deep tilth is well understood by the gardener and small-holder as attained by means of the spade, it is little, if at all, practised by the farmer, probably for want of the proper means or machinery. The average farmer could easily double his production by the practice of deeper ploughing added to a more generous use of manures.—S. O'DWYER.

HORSES AT THE FRONT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I hope you will forgive my troubling you again, but I think "No. 4" hits the right nail on the head this time. I cannot agree with "No. 2's" letter, though I have a great respect for the A.V.C. and always made friends of my V.O. and M.O. for the sake of my horses and mules and men. And very good most of them were to us. I would very much like to hear "No. 4's" opinion on the treatment of animals. For instance, just before I left my brigade I was riding past the transport horse lines of one of our most famous infantry regiments and saw a man deliberately kick a good-looking chestnut horse in the belly. It was by no means the first time I had seen the same thing happen. I wonder if correspondent "No. 2" ever examined the lips and mouths of his horses and mules when he was inspecting them. I have seen horses and mules being worked hard whose lips and corners of their mouths were raw and bleeding through being jagged in the mouth. Of course, I know a great deal of ill-usage was due to the driver's ignorance, and I found it made a great difference to the men if their officers took a *real* interest in the horses. I consider the wastage of horses and mules in the war was excessive; but what does "No. 4" think about my remarks on ill-treatment?—"No. 5."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your "Correspondence" columns of September 1st, under the heading of "Horses at the Front," is a short letter by "No. 5" which contains statements so entirely opposed to actual facts that it should not remain unanswered. I am inclined to ask in the idiom of America, "What has stung you, 'No. 5'?" No fair-minded observer can for a moment admit that there is any truth, or, indeed, shadow of truth, in such assertions as the following: (1) Drivers "take a delight in ill treating their horses, especially their mules." (2) Losses are due to "ignorant, brutal shoeing smiths and farrier sergeants." (3) "The rule was for the animals to be misunderstood, and on the whole unkindly treated." As a general officer of some ten years' standing, who has been commanding divisions or larger bodies of troops for the past eight years, I have no hesitation in saying that the letter of "No. 5" is not only a very gross libel on our Army, but is also absolutely and wilfully opposed to facts. It is quite true that those of the new and later armies who have the management of horses, whether cavalry, artillery or transport, have not the experience or the knowledge of the older soldiers. But it is unquestionably the case that care of, and kindness to, their charges is the rule, and that any exceptions to this rule receive very short shrift from their commanding officers. My experience is that the way in which these inexperienced men learn their work and establish confidence and friendly relations between their horses and themselves is one of the revela-

tions of the war. I had hoped that the dreary old idea of the mule as an evilly disposed wild beast from which the Devil had to be exorcised with a stick was dead and buried. I am perfectly confident that it has no existence among our transport men. If "No. 5" was aware of the good done by divisional horse shows over the water and in England among the Forces going out, and of the kindness with which animals are, in fact, treated, his deplorable letter would not have been written. In justice to the Army, so grossly maligned by your correspondent, I hope that you will publish this reply, which endeavours to deal with the accusation of ill-treatment only. Stable management is a separate question.—MINDEN.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As I see that there is some correspondence going on in regard to the wastage of horses in France, I would much like you to give a few figures which I know to be facts and which will confound Correspondent "No. 2's" absolutely ridiculous statement that it amounts to round about 15 per cent. I have been in France for over twenty months as a battery commander, and during that time have had command of three separate batteries in three different divisions. My first battery I took over about a week before they proceeded to France. The condition of the horses was piteous in the extreme. They had been during two months of rainy weather on the same lines and were up to their hocks in slush (literally). Out of this battery during the first six months in France I had to evacuate 51 horses for various reasons, 15 for debility. This was out of a complement of 134 horses. During the nine months I had the battery 63 altogether were evacuated, and this was the average for all the batteries in the brigade; one has two more than that number. A lot of this could have been avoided if the battery commanders had had a free hand, e.g., we were not allowed to clip. In January, finding I had some six horses lousy, I started clipping, but was stopped and hauled over the coals by the A.V.D.S. Of course, other horses got lousy and went back in condition. We were then, one month afterwards (when the damage was done), told to clip. Consequence, 6 horses come to a shadow evacuated. I was then given command of a six-gun battery in another division. Horses excellent. After three months we were moved to another army and put in standing rotten with skin disease, but were not told anything about it. Consequence, 28 horses evacuated after we had been there a month, and in nine months I had the battery, and my unit had the best percentage by a long way. I lost 53 horses out of 170 from various reasons, and in the next three months the battery lost 22 more, killed, wounded, etc., making for the year 75 out of 170. The next battery I had when I took it over was in a terrible state, having been all the winter out in the open. In three months I lost 21, including 2 killed and 5 wounded, and was congratulated by the General on bringing the horses round and getting them into first-class condition. Another battery in the same brigade during those three months lost 45. I am fairly old, have known horses all my life and always kept a stud of hunters, and I find that these figures are not at all out of the way, and that B.C.s I have asked in England this last week put the evacuations considerably higher—at from 80 to 100 horses per battery of 170 per annum. I certainly think that the wastage will be a lot less now. The appointment of Yeomanry officers for artillery lines has helped a lot, I believe, and have been told so by two Generals, although I have never come across them. The appointment to a corps of a horse-master has helped a lot also. The ordinary gunner subaltern is willing to learn, but you cannot learn horsemanship in six months and also gunnery, and the former is neglected for the latter. Things are in a far better way now than they were in autumn, 1915. I do not think the wastage was due so much to the ignorance of the officers of the batteries as it was to the staff above them and the various and contradictory orders often issued, which amounted to nothing except to make a B.C. tear his hair with being thwarted in various ways in his method of treating horses. There is now much more give and take between the A.V.C.s and the B.C.s, as before the majority of the A.V.D.S.s and A.V.C.s considered they were the only people who had ever seen a horse or knew how it ought to be treated, and everyone else was a fool.—UBIQUE.

CONTINUING SUMMER TIME.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I was very glad to see in your "Country Notes" in COUNTRY LIFE for September 25th (which I have taken in since January 8th, 1897) your comments on continuing Summer Time. Last year it ended October 1st, quite soon enough, seeing that the sun rises on that day at 6.1 (7.1 Summer Time). On October 18th the sun rises at 6.30 (7.30 Summer Time), and I am proposing to keep my clocks as they are till then. Summer Time has been the greatest boon of modern times, and I hope, as do most others, that it will become permanent. Summer Time could easily start March 22nd (sun rises 6.0) and end October 1st (sun rises 6.0), and there is no reason why it should not start and end with sun rising at 6.30 (March 9th and October 18th).—CHARLES J. OAKELEY (Bart.).

ENGLISH LITERATURE FOR A FRENCH READER.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—If "H. E." wishes for a list of books without dialect and written in the best English, surely he or she could not do better than recommend the following authors to the French friend. For modern ones I should suggest Mrs. Humphry Ward, Mary Chomondley, Mrs. Belloc Lowndes and Archibald Marshall. The English of the two first is perfect, and both Mary Chomondley and Archibald Marshall give good pictures of the best English life. For classics, Thackeray—and any cultivated French person with a good knowledge of English would surely approve of his style—and also that of Charlotte Brontë. Anthony Trollope might perhaps be found dull, but the same cannot be said of Wilkie Collins and Charles Reade.—MAY ARMSTRONG.

THE PRAIRIE HARE OF CANADA.

[To the Editor of "Country Life."]

SIR,—I am sending you two photographs of the prairie hare, showing the summer and winter coats. The change to white generally corresponds with



IN HIS SUMMER COAT.



CONSPICUOUS UNTIL THE SNOW COMES.

has certainly never been a like absence of wasps during the last thirty years. The hard winter can have had nothing to do with it, for in the spring the queen wasps were numerous, indeed, more numerous than usual, on the cotoneaster bushes when in flower, and the dry early summer seemed likely to be favourable to the growth of pests.—E. H. GODDARD.

[Wasps appeared to be plentiful at the beginning, but probably the unseasonable rains did for them.—Ed.]

FROM THE PALESTINE FRONT.

[To the Editor of "Country Life."]

SIR,—Perhaps this coast view, taken when our troops were working through the Sinai Peninsula, may be of interest to those of your readers whose soldier friends are in the Holy Land.—A.

FRIENDLY PIGEONS.

[To the Editor of "Country Life."]

SIR,—Perhaps you would like the enclosed pretty snapshot of my friend feeding his pigeons. They are wonderfully tame and will feed from his hand or his hat, and each bird seems to have his pet place. If tea is served on the lawn the pigeons always consider themselves invited, and perch, cooing, on my friend's shoulders until fed. When he goes into the house they sometimes sit dismally on the doorstep, hoping that he has only gone to get them something to eat.—ARIEL.



ONE OF THE PIGEONS MAKES FREE WITH THEIR FRIEND'S HAT.

the early November snowstorms, but occasionally the snow is late and the animals become conspicuous instead of invisible.—H. H. PITTMAN, Saskatchewan.

THE ABSENCE OF WASPS.

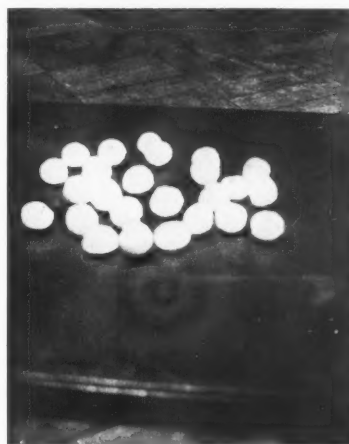
[To the Editor.]

SIR,—Can anyone explain the extraordinary absence of wasps this summer? I can speak for this district of North Wilts and for parts, at all events, of North Oxfordshire, Glamorganshire, Carnarvonshire and Hereford. Here I have literally seen exactly six wasps this autumn. We have great crops of plums, apples, peaches and figs, and no wasps to eat them. There

HAILSTONES IN CHINA.

[To the Editor of "Country Life."]

SIR,—On May 3rd last, in the evening, Shanghai was visited by a storm of rain, followed by a shower of hailstones of extraordinary size, and accompanied by flashes of heat lightning and peals of thunder. Much damage was done to glass roofs, which was not strange seeing that fourteen of the hailstones, though beginning to melt, weighed a pound. In one district two were picked up weighing an ounce each; one 4½ ins. in circumference is reported, and another of 7 ins.; two or three of 6 ins., quite round, were also seen. The photograph which I am enclosing shows some of these monster hailstones—of course, already a little melted. An egg is photographed with them, but it is difficult to decide which object is the egg.—T.



HAILSTONES AND AN EGG. WHICH IS IT?

POTATOES FROM HOME—SAVED SEED.

[To the Editor.]

SIR,—Gardeners who pursue their craft for its interest as well as for profit may like to save the berries of their potatoes, gathering only from healthy haulms. The best method is to hang up the "apples," in small bunches, suspended from a string stretched across a dry room, to remain until February, when the seeds are obtained from them either by soaking away the pulp, or picking them out carefully on the tip of a blunt penknife. An authority, writing in 1850, said: "The seed is then dried, and kept till April, when it is sown in drills about a quarter of an inch deep, and 6 ins. apart, in rich light soil. The plants are weeded, and earth drawn up to their stems when an inch in height, and as soon as the height has increased to 3 ins. they are moved



SURF ON THE SHORES OF THE SINAI PENINSULA.

to a similar soil, in rows, 16 ins. apart each way. Being finally taken up in October, they must be preserved until the following spring, to be then replanted and treated as for store crops. The tubers of every seedling should be kept separate, as scarcely two will be of similar habit and quality. . . . If the seed is obtained from a red potato that flowered in the neighbourhood of a white tubered variety, the seedlings will, in all probability, resemble both their parents; but an exact resemblance to the original stock is seldom met with. . . . A variety of the potato is generally considered to continue about fourteen years in perfection, after which period it gradually loses its good qualities, becoming of inferior flavour and unproductive." Evelyn, by the by, in his "Acetaria: or Discourse of Sallets," recommends pickling "the small green fruit of the potato, when about the size of the wild cherry."—E. D.

[A singular thing about modern varieties of potatoes is that they seldom produce fruits. A comparatively few years ago potato "apples" were common and looked upon with suspicion as they were said to be poisonous, which is, indeed, quite probable; but this year we have looked over scores of modern varieties growing in fields without noticing a single fruit.—Ed.]

HARVESTING ACORNS FOR FEEDING SWINE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I shall be much obliged if you or any readers of COUNTRY LIFE could inform me as to the best methods of harvesting acorns, horse chestnuts and hazel nuts; this year there is a great crop of these seeds in this district (High Furness, Lancs.), and, pig foods being very expensive, it seems a great mistake to let the wild fruits be wasted for lack of gathering and careful harvesting so that they will keep during the winter. The seeds are required chiefly for feeding a herd of pigs, but they might come in useful, in the form of meal, for poultry also, if these foods are suitable, on which point I should like to be informed. I should be glad if the following queries could be answered: (1) For the feeding of swine, is it necessary to grind them into meal, or can the seeds be fed whole? (2) What is the most expeditious method of collecting acorns? I cannot think of anything better than to lay large sheets on the ground, climbing up into the tree and shaking the branches; sweeping them up in long grass would be a very tedious affair. (3) Is it better to spread the acorns thinly in the sun to dry, or is it better to dry them in a kiln? (4) I have been told that acorns and chestnuts are not a complete food by themselves, but require feeding with peas, beans or corn. (5) What would be a fair ration for breeding sows and young stores? (6) I shall be glad of any information on the subject, and especially I should like to be warned of any danger there may be in using these foods in quantity.—C. E. HOYLAND.

P.S.—I may say also that my herd roams about at will in an area reserved for it, and so would have the benefit of feeding on the fallen seed, but by the middle of December this supply is usually used up; it is then that the harvested acorns would come in most useful.—C. E. H.

[(1) It is very much better for the digestion of the acorns if they are passed through a cake bruiser such as most farms possess, otherwise it is not absolutely necessary. (2) Where the grass is short they may be swept up. In the case of long grass the sheet method suggested is quite good. (3) They dry quite readily in a barn or shed. In fact, the difficulty is often great to prevent shrivelling. If they are to be ground into meal, then kiln dry. (4) Acorns alone do not give the best results in the feeding of stock, and should only be given as part of the diet. Although we have known sheep to fatten on acorns, peas, beans or corn will supplement the diet. (5) Three to three and a half pounds of beans per head is a good ration. If the animals are getting plenty of exercise and running about foraging for themselves, more may be consumed with impunity. (6) It is, however, possible for animals to get an overdose if acorns are very plentiful.—Ed.]

"THE OLD ORDER CHANGETH."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As the picturesque old ferry on Windermere has just been replaced by a new, smart twentieth century ferry, perhaps the enclosed photographs may be of use in your Correspondence columns.—WYNANDERMERE.



THE FIRST FERRY ON WINDERMERE.



THE NEWEST FERRY WHICH HAS REPLACED IT.

HOMELESS THROUGH AN AIR RAID.

[THE EDITOR.]

SIR,—The little owl in my photograph was rendered homeless by an air raid and found very dazed on the roadside. He stayed with us for about three weeks; the quaintest little fellow, a ball of grey fluff with blue eyes, very sleepy all day and just as lively towards the night. He got quite tame, but as soon as he was old enough flew away. We fed him on sparrows, which he ate, feathers and all.—JOHN WARD.



THE LITTLE OWL DRINKING FROM A SPOON.

A FOX-TERRIER ADOPTS YOUNG RABBITS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—A month ago my fox-terrier was found in a wood with six young rabbits about a fortnight old, which she had dug out of a hole and, although I presume she killed the mother, she has devoted herself to the young ones ever since. It is all the more surprising as she has never had a family of her own. I should be interested to know whether any of your readers have heard of anything similar.—PHYLLIS LEGH.

FRUIT PULP AND TINS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be much obliged if you would let me know whether it would affect jam or pulped fruit if kept in tins. I have difficulty in getting glass jars, but I have a large quantity of empty treacle tins, which are well made, with nicely fitting lids. I know it would be a great boon to many people if these tins could be utilised, and it would be a method of preserving a quantity of fruit which will otherwise be wasted.—H. MARCUS.

[We do not recommend that jam or pulped fruit should be kept in tins unless sealed down, and the tins to which you refer are hardly likely to be airtight. Large quantities of pulp are sent to this country in tins, and so long as air is excluded the pulp is not affected, but it should be emptied from the tins as soon as they are opened. It is not necessary to use only glass jars for jam, as any jars will do, and there are plenty of these to be had. We find the tins very useful for the storing of dry goods.—Ed.]

DRYING NORFOLK BEEFING APPLES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I should be greatly obliged if any of your readers could give a recipe for the old-fashioned way of drying apples, called "Norfolk Biffins"; they were much superior to Normandy Pippins, but one rarely sees them for sale now.—A. B. C.

[We are assuming that the apples referred to were dried without cutting, for the Norfolk Beefing has always been looked upon as one of the best apples for baking whole. Normandy Pippins are also dried whole with just the core taken out, but they need to be done in a proper drying factory with a certain temperature and a current of air. So far as we know they could not easily be done in the home; it is only small fruits or large fruits sliced that can be dried in the oven. Happily, Norfolk Beefing is an excellent keeper; it is in season from November till July.—Ed.]

BUTTERFLIES OF 1917.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It may interest your readers to know that I captured a fine specimen of the Convolvulus Hawk Moth (*Sphinx Convolvuli*) here on September 1st.—J. ANTHONY PLOWMAN, Norfolk.